71.85

THE TRIUMPH OF YOUTH

THE TRIUMPH OF YOUTH

By JACOB WASSERMANN

WITH A PREFATORY WORD BY
EMIL LUDWIG

LONDON
GEORGE ALLEN & UNWIN LTD
MUSEUM STREET

First published in German under the title "Der Aufruhr un den Junker Ernst"
First published in Great Britain 1928
(All rights reserved)

Printed in Great Britain by
Unwin Brothers, Ltd., Woking

PREFATORY NOTE

"Ich halte Jacob Wassermann fuer einen der groessten Autoren unserer Zeit."

(*I consider Jacob Wassermann to be one of the greatest authors of our time.*)

EMIL LUDWIG.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
CHAPTER I.	13
CHAPTER II.	16
CHAPTER III.	23
CHAPTER IV.	30
CHAPTER V.	37
CHAPTER VI.	46
CHAPTER VII.	60
CHAPTER VIII.	75
CHAPTER IX.	86
CHAPTER X.	104
CHAPTER XI.	123
CHAPTER XII.	140
CHAPTER XIII.	160
CHAPTER XIV.	185
CHAPTER XV.	209

I

On an April afternoon in the third year of his reign, Bishop Philipp Adolph of Würzburg was notified by a courier on horseback that his sister-in-law, Baroness Theodata of Ehrenberg, had arrived at Castle Ehrenberg on Easter Sunday.

This was an unexpected message. For eight years the Baroness had almost dropped out of sight. Her husband, the Bishop's brother, a chamberlain at the Imperial Court in Prague, had been killed in a duel with a certain Baron Wrbna in the year of Emperor Mathias's death. Beyond a purse filled with ducats which was found in his pocket he had left nothing but a multitude of debts, which Philipp Adolph, who at that time was still abbot at Rimpar and a canon of the Cathedral at Würzburg, was requested to pay. But he was very loath to do so. Great as his anger was with the frivolous life led by his

brother and sister-in-law, his avarice was even greater.

The Baroness, not knowing what else to do, sent her six-year-old son Ernest, together with his deaf nurse Lenette and his tutor Onno Molitor, to Castle Ehrenberg in Franconia, the ancestral family-seat bordering on Spessart Forest, and commended him to the care of his uncle, the wealthy prelate. The latter made a wry face, but had to acquiesce in spite of his anger, as he considered it his Christian duty to provide for his forsaken nephew. This was done in the following manner: he gave orders that his steward Wallork, who for thirty years had been entrusted with the management of the castle, the care of the cattle and the collection of the tithes—lean cattle, by the way, and tithes that were extorted from the poverty-stricken peasants with difficulty—was to receive five Rhenish guldens per month out of his private purse. In addition his treasurer was instructed to pay an annual salary of fifteen Rhenish guldens to Master Molitor. The latter

was to make a personal report every New Year's Day regarding the nephew's progress, especially with regard to his bringing up as an orthodox Christian.

During all these years the Bishop had never set foot upon Ehrenberg, nor had he seen his nephew or taken any other interest in him. About the Baroness he had only heard meanwhile that she was going about the world as an adventuress. He did not investigate whether this report was true, if for no other reason than that he preferred not even to hear her name mentioned. The people in Ehrenberg likewise heard only vague rumours about her. The strangest thing was that she completely ignored the existence of her own child, neither writing to him nor even wasting a breath on him, so that it seemed questionable whether she knew that he was still alive. For the past three years even sporadic news had ceased to arrive, and with an inner feeling of satisfaction the Bishop took it for granted that she had departed this life.

And now she was back again.

II

INFORMING the Bishop of her arrival, however, was not the end of the matter. That would not have deprived him of the peace of mind he so urgently needed to perform the duties of his high office—ferreting out heretics, witches and sorcerers, making them confess and pronouncing judgment upon them. For the wicked weeds of witchcraft were sprouting ever more luxuriantly from the accursed soil of the land, so that the task was almost too great for the avenging and rescuing arm of justice. What concern of his was this woman, the widow of his dissolute brother who had died long ago? Let her come; let her disappear again; why should he concern himself about her? However, scarcely twenty-four hours later another messenger appeared, bearing another missive, in the Baroness's own hand, with an urgent appeal to His Eminence, her honoured brother-in-law,

to give the bearer of the letter fifty ducats. At Ehrenberg the most essential things were lacking. Creditors who could not be put off had to be saitsfied, such as the driver who had brought her from Kassel to Ehrenberg. The latter, now being obliged to wait for his pay, was making a dreadful row in the courtyard. Then there was the doctor whom she had summoned from Rimpar because of a stomach disorder. The people in the castle, however, were so destitute that they could not be of any assistance to her in her difficult position.

When the Bishop had read this epistle, the lids of his bright and restless little eyes grew red. Indignantly he threw the letter on the table to his secretary, Michel Baumgarten, a Franciscan monk. In harsh tones he ordered him to write what he dictated; to be careful not to omit a syllable, but to write exactly what he told him. Having paced up and down the room a few times with short, rapid strides, and tugging nervously, with lean fingers heavily adorned with rings, at

the sparse goatee beard which protruded from his chin, he began to dictate in the shrill voice of an old woman: " 'We beg to inform Your Grace once and for all that we are by no means inclined to grant your unjustified demands upon our munificence.' Have you got that? Munificence. Period. Continue: 'We beg to remind Your Grace most emphatically . . .' No, cross that out again. We will find a better phrase. We want to give her to understand that we are treating her as the godless and dishonourable person that she is, that her conduct is a reflection upon our Christian reputation and is contrary to all duty and morality. We want to make an end of her pretentious arrogance by cutting it at the root. We are not a loan-office. We have no hen laying golden ducats. We've done enough by spending our savings all these years to feed the nephew she has saddled upon us, and his lazy tutor. Did you make note of that?"

The monk uttered a respectful grunt.

Just as the Bishop was about to continue, a clammy voice was heard in the rear of the room:

"Not that way. You cannot do it. Not in that manner," said the voice.

A tall, haggard man had softly entered through a tapestried door. It was the Jesuit, Pater Gropp, confessor and confidant of the Bishop, his right hand, executor of his will and the real judge in all trials of witches and sorcerers, assigned to him by the ecclesiastical college.

Intimidated as usual when he faced the Jesuit, the Bishop asked hesitatingly: "How else shall I do it? In what other way can one get rid of such a female relative? What else do you advise?"

A contemptuous smile twitched about the corners of the Jesuit's mouth. His lips looked as if the skin had been severed by a knife and was just beginning to grow together again. He had a cone-shaped, tapering forehead with stiff black hair hanging over it, and a sallow face.

"You cannot insult the woman in such direct fashion, Bishop," he replied after a measured silence, without raising his eyelids. "On the contrary, you must make a show of paying her

your proper respects. She was the legally wedded spouse of your own brother. I do not say that you should go so far as to send her the money. There's no hurry about that. To-morrow or the day after she will make more requests anyhow. By gratifying cupidity, you encourage it. It is my opinion, if I may venture to give such advice, that you must go and make a call at Ehrenberg. It is advisable to look after things there a bit. It would not be out of place, once you are there, to have a look at the young Baron. All sorts of unpleasant things regarding him have come to my ears. By doing that you can perhaps save a soul which is already on the brink of the precipice. I am merely offering this as a suggestion, that's all. You may do whatever you think best."

He bowed coldly. He knew the power of his word. He knew by experience how to cool off the flickering ourbursts of the Bishop's temper, and, this accomplished, to fan them in such a way that they led to logical and effective action.

The Bishop passed the tips of his fingers over

his cassock, stained with the remnants of food. "If you think it is desirable for me to go to Ehrenberg, well, then, let us go," he mumbled in astonishment. "Let us go on Saint Walpurgis Day. But heretofore it has not seemed advisable to you to let my nephew come to see me, not to mention my calling on him. . . ." His answer sounded timid. He racked his brain to discover the Jesuit's secret motives. But the latter assumed an expression as though he did not notice the Bishop's effort and replied dryly: "Not heretofore, but now it seems to me to be time. Please do not forget that Baron Ernest will soon be fifteen years of age, and that you must begin to have some Christian concern for his future."

The conversation between the Prince of the Church and the Jesuit was interrupted by the shrill high sound of a bell. Michel Baumgarten arose, crossed himself, and went down on his knees, remaining in this position until the uncanny tinkling ceased. The Bishop and Pater Gropp likewise crossed themselves. When the mono-

tonous chant of the *miserere* was wafted from Cathedral Square into the room, they bowed their heads, the Bishop in terrified reverence, Pater Gropp with his accustomed sinister gloominess.

It was the bell that tolled for an execution. The chanters were Dominican monks who, led by Father Gassner, were conducting three condemned women to the place of execution outside the gates to witness their burning and to administer spiritual consolation.

III

PLAIN in his habits and unsophisticated in mind, Bishop Philipp Adolph did not in the least resemble the powerful ecclesiastical rulers of his time. He lived frugally, dressed poorly and occupied only two dark rooms in the ancient palace behind the Cathedral. He received distinguished visitors to his capital city only when a reputation of great piety preceded them and they declared themselves in need of spiritual solace. He was opposed to all luxury and display. Upon assuming office he had ordered the crystal chandeliers and Venetian mirrors to be covered with black cloth. The silver and gold table plate of his predecessors was locked away in chests. Most of the servants and officials of the house were discharged and the household expenses reduced to the absolute minimum. He hated public festivities, popular entertainments, processions, torchlight parades, music, dancing

and masquerades. As the people of Lower Franconia had always been vivacious and addicted to worldly pleasures, the beginning of his rule resembled a frost descending upon a garden in full bloom.

He was an utterly lonely man. But this loneliness was not caused by absorption in philosophical speculation, nor was it due to the resignation of a man disillusioned by the things of this world and now contemplating heavenly things. It had been produced by fear. Narrow of mind and cheerless of heart, he was completely enthralled by the delusion that man is surrounded on all sides by demons. This had its beginnings early in his life; it was fostered and encouraged by all the horrors and confusions of the age; its roots reached deep down into his thoughts and dreams. This tendency in him was restrained as long as he led the comfortable life of a prelate, but now that he was ruler of a territory and lord over many thousand souls, it knew no bounds, and he spared no one in his relentless warfare.

He was so steeped in fear of and belief in demons that with every step he took he trembled before the next. The stone under his foot and the beam above his head appeared to be bewitched. The air he breathed, the book in which he read, the pillow on which he slept at night might have been poisoned by witchcraft. Neither prayer nor castigation offered protection. But this was insignificant compared with the danger with which he was threatened by human beings, by those who had conspired to destroy the Kingdom of God, who bewitched cattle, knew baneful charms and flew to the sacrificial feasts of the Baalim; who forced their minor children under the dominion of the tailed devil, put maddening drops into the wine and abused the Holy Host; who herded the Sabbath flocks, paid with false gold and bred horrible changelings through intercourse with Satan.

When he stopped to contemplate the actions of men, be became all the more certain that Lucifer's power was on the increase. His one and

only concern was to save the people from perdition. Failure of crops, hailstorms, drought, floods, insurrection, famine, war and pestilence all came from one and the same source; all wickedness and crime, all brawls, all diseases, all contumely, domestic discord, marital infidelity, heresy, drunkenness, debauchery, robbery and usury. It was only a question each time of finding the guilty one, the one in league with the demons, who had the mark on his body, the accursed one, be it man, woman or child, Jew or Christian.

Could it be difficult to find him when everywhere there were fingers pointing at him? At whom? Well, at the one who was at the very moment making himself conspicuous. At the best marksman, for instance. Or at the most skilful watchmaker. At a bookworm or at a peaceful loafer. At a person who seemed troubled with a bad conscience or one whose pride had gone to his head. At the poor cottager who hated his rich neighbour, the rich man who refused alms to the beggar, the virgin who rejected earnest suitors,

the student reputed to be a freethinker, the old woman surviving her husband, son and grandson, the scholar in search of Greek wisdom, the wench who alienated husbands from their wives, the chaste wife who had shown the door to an insolent gallant, the peasant who cursed in his barn.

The wood in the stove would not burn; there was an objectionable person in the house; she had bewitched the wood, she was the witch; watchful eyes had seen her slip through the keyhole at night. Lightning had damaged the wall; the maid summoned it. It was known to some, to be sure, that she was pregnant by her master and that he would be rid of her if he reported her to the judges of the witch-trials. A man could easily cover up a wrong he had committed if he accused a woman of having carnal relations with Satan. At the same time his covetousness was aroused, as he received an informer's reward of three guldens and whatever remained of the condemned person's estate after the inquisition, the secular court, the Church and the bailiff had been satisfied. It was

remunerative, although it was no protection against a similar fate.

Suspicion lurked everywhere. With fearful anticipation people fixed their eyes upon one another. Envy changed to horror (for the person envied); admiration produced horror (for the person admired); love could end at the stake. A traitor was hiding in every merry social gathering, until at last there was no more social life and people avoided each other.

There were many, of course, who did not believe in sorcery or witchcraft, or who believed only half-heartedly. They sought security in silence and acquiescence. Among the common people, however, there was no light, nobody who was better informed. They had to submit to it. They carried on their business in an atmosphere reeking with burnt corpses. If they did not rejoice over one who had confessed, they themselves would be dragged to the place of execution, away from their work, out of the matrimonial bed, it did not matter which. The Bishop himself pos-

sessed the most unshakable faith. Burrowing into the recesses of his madness like a hungry rat, he made a relentless search for the souls led astray by the legions of hell. They were committing robbery against God and the Church, and it was a duty imposed upon him to recover the stolen goods, even the souls themselves. The souls must be liberated from the demon's grip. The only way to accomplish this was by means of the inquisition, torture and death by fire. This was the practice in the entire Roman Empire. The Holy Father commanded it, the Emperor sanctioned it, the ecclesiastical colleges praised it, illustrious tribunals and highly learned codes of law legitimized it. In this respect the Protestants were not only of one mind with the Catholics, they even surpassed the latter in their zeal of persecution. It was a system with iron fingers from which there was no escape even for a fly possessed with the devil.

IV

If it had not been for Pater Gropp, the Bishop's activity, like that of so many others, would probably have remained mere planless raving, a passion occasionally flaring up without working itself to a frenzy. It was Pater Gropp who garnered the rank crop and ground it in the big mill whose wheels thundered through the whole century. For from human souls the bread of eternity was here to be baked.

The doctrine was grounded in the universe and in the world's creation and was equally unimpeachable. Nature's deepest secrets had been wrested from her; she had handed over her keys to a tribunal of adepts who now had unlimited sway over mankind. What illustrious minds had thought reappeared in the shape of vicious equivocation, poisoned by scholasticism, obscured by magical vapours. Often, and not infrequently at

night, Pater Gropp sat before the attentive Bishop, the expert before the pupil, to let him share in the illumination of which the Jesuit had been deemed worthy.

There is a God of Light and a God of Darkness, the Jesuit taught. There are two fundamentally different and conflicting principles, the good, that of immaterial things, and the evil, that of material things. Observe man and see how this dualism recurs in him, how his physical part is bound up with the Evil One, his invisible part with his Creator who creates nothing that is transitory. The body is perishable; sin is of the body; therefore from eternity sin appertains to the God of Darkness and is his work.

When the world came into existence, it was not as though the tree of goodness growing in man had cast off its foliage, as if struck by a frost; it was not as though an axe had hewn off the branches and cut the trunk off at the ground, for in that case the trunk could still have put forth new shoots. No, the very last fibre was extirpated,

the last germ of life was destroyed, the higher symbols were extinguished. The demons now have free access to the darkness of death which has overwhelmed man. They enter man as bees do their cells; it is pleasant for them to dwell there, for they also find their honey there. Not only is man now possessed with the demons as if ensnared against his will; not only is his body fettered, but his soul has been surrendered in full consciousness; the dread bird of darkness has descended through his open mouth into his heart.

Now if anyone wishes to learn in what manner of place these messengers of darkness dwell and what their hereditary spirit-realm is like, he can be told that their dwelling-place is opposite Paradise —an infinite opposite, to be sure, a dimension no human brain can comprehend. There they have excavated a pyramidal hell; seven rivers of fire flow through it; it is guarded by seven angels of perdition. Thus it was already pictured in the cabala of the Jews. Just as there are degrees of sanctity, there are also stages of unholiness and

damnation. Just as man and woman in Paradise are contained in one person, so also in Hell. The power God has granted Satan over the world is immeasurable. The Satanic spirits dwell with man, beside him, in him; and they mock him. They strive to do him harm. They thirst for his blood.

But why? Why does the Lord of the world permit it? This is to be explained by the fact that the antithesis between good and evil extends into the cryptic origins of the universe and is imparted to all beings as they emerge from their first causes. When the demons force their way into nature, they find there certain things which aid them in their designs. While sun and moon, to be sure, do not stand to each other in the relation of good and evil, they, nevertheless, react differently to the powers of darkness. The lunar essence, doubly bound in the universe, by the earth and by the sun, is characterized by bondage and can be more easily dominated by the evil as well as by the good principle. The solar essence, however, imposing restraint, can be subdued only by a

force of equal power. The same reason which in the physical world accounts for the greater frequency of lunar tides as compared with solar also explains why there are more moon-wives than sun-seers, more sorceresses than sorcerers, more witches than wizards.

Now reason thus: He who has reached the point of engaging himself with evil by the aid of demons, be it casually or in permanence, by seeking or by biding, through sufferance or doing, has entered a new realm of existence. His soul has made a migration, and as it takes up its abode in a new region, his whole being must adapt itself to the laws prevailing there. Strengthening its hold upon him more and more, the infernal element enmeshes him ever more closely until he comes wholly under its sway. Yet the demon has no power over his victim as long as the latter withholds his consent and does not lift the bar betwixt him and the hostile principle. His consent can be gained gradually and by trickery. Satan has countless emissaries, ranging from the common sprites,

goblins and familiars to those who make men possessed and those who call themselves spirits of true freedom; from imps who conceal themselves behind a mask of respectability, obedience and even of piety to vampires and blood-demons. However, this surrender can also result from an act of free will on the part of one seeking grace in paths of darkness. In either case the person thus ensnared dwells in a metamorphosed world. His every relationship has been exchanged, and as he traverses the paths of the accursed realm he descends from abyss to abyss. His way of looking at the world has been inverted; what is friendly seems hostile, what is ugly seems beautiful; the horrible is imbued with a deceptive glamour, the unnatural has a pleasing aspect. Finally a stage is reached where human nature in complete perversion casts out its divine part and irretrievably falls prey to the devil.

But it has to be wrested from him; that is the task. It must be wrested from him. The walls shutting in the lost brother must be broken

through from without, the barriers enclosing the realm of darkness must be razed from within, even at the cost of every conceivable torture which he may have to suffer, even at the cost of the most painful death. Then at least his soul has been set free.

V

Baroness Theodata of Ehrenberg was descended from an old Lotharingian family. The youngest of eight sisters, her only dowry had been three chests full of clothing and linen and a few golden necklaces and bracelets. In addition she had received the deaf nurse Lenette. This was the cause of Philipp Adolph's animosity. He had never forgiven her her poverty, for because of this his brother with his entire household was a constant source of expense to him.

That is the way he looked at the matter. To the Baroness he was the only blood-relation of her husband, the man who could have helped him get on his feet again when he had made a failure of his life, if he had shown only a little good will and a little love, but who failed to do so, or did so only grudgingly, did it only seldom or half-heartedly. To her he was the man to whom

they had to address petition after petition, but who guarded his patrimony with a tight fist. He had wisely managed to increase his means with benefices, perquisites and gifts, while his brother, a failure as a soldier, a human failure since birth, had squandered, gambled away, lost everything. Her own brother-in-law, her sister's husband, who was ambassador at the Court of the Elector of Saxony, had procured for him his position as chamberlain, which was not very lucrative and in which he felt unhappy because he had absolutely no talent for it. Theodata was still young and optimistic at that time, and she had succeeded in persuading him that this would be a road to success and reputation. Because she had been so positive in her assertions, he had believed it for a while. He had believed it as long as he still thought highly of her, but afterward he believed it no more. The soldier's life was repugnant to him; the courtier's life was even more repugnant to him; he himself would have been unable to say what kind of life would not have been repugnant to him.

In the course of time she had sunk to the level of a scullery maid, and he beat her whenever he suffered any disappointment. She also had to suffer beatings for his incapacity, his weakness, his laziness, for the disrespect with which he was treated at Court. Finally he took up the hue and cry of his ecclesiastical brother by maliciously reproaching her for her family's beggarliness. Many a night she slept away from home because she feared his brutality when he was drunk. She spent many a day trying to raise money from Jews and money-lenders, offering security, furnishing bail, begging for more time. It was only when she brought him money that she was safe from his coarse and brutal treatment. On one occasion he had even threatened to throw their child out of the window if she did not procure a hundred guldens by noon; another time he said he would drive her out naked with his riding-whip to Wenzel Square if she did not induce the Jew Meisel, his most ruthless creditor, to show some indulgence. All this and many other things came back to her

in later years, just as in a fever certain visions from a former delirium may reappear, no matter how long afterward.

In dark confusion people and places surged through her mind, which was not blessed with the light of imagination. One event constantly recurred to her which was the crowning point, as it were, of her suffering at the end of five and a half years of married life. In the night before his duel her husband, laughing wildly, had dragged the sleeping boy Ernest out of his bed. He wanted to take him along so he might see his father fight. In spite of her pleading and her tears he had actually carried him away in his arms. The innocent child, half-asleep, had thrown his arms around his father's red, bloated neck and had turned away from her, not wishing to have anything to do with her. Why did he turn away from her? Why from her and not from him? She recalled that the Baron's companions had howled their approval and that in her dismay she had wandered aimlessly through the streets. This was indelibly engraved on her

soul, but it descended beneath the surface; it was present, but it became submerged and incrusted. Then he lay before her as a corpse, the raving weakling, silent and livid, and she felt only the one desire to go away, far away, to hear nothing, to see nothing. She did not even wish to see her boy any more. In her mind's eye he had suddenly become so identified with the image of his father that she was unable to bear his gaze, and she had a perfect horror of this six-year-old boy when she contemplated what he would be like at twenty. Everything became inverted in her; her whole nature became changed. She wanted only to be free, free from all ties and fetters, and she would have been grateful to God had she also been able to divest herself of the name of Ehrenberg.

Then she went about in the world, visiting her seven sisters without waiting for invitations. She began with the eldest one, who had married a chancellor in the Electorate of Trier, and ended with her youngest sister, whose husband was in the service of the Landgrave of Hesse-Kassel.

They all welcomed her at first, but when they found that she remained too long, they gave her to understand that it was now time for her to move on, to some other sister who wished to have the pleasure of her company, or to a lady of high nobility whose acquaintance she had made and who had kindly invited her. In this manner she spent a winter in the Moselle district, spring and summer in Holstein, fall and winter again in Pfalz-Neuburg; then she stayed with her sister Mathilde in the earldom of Sorau, then with the Princess of Cleve de Cleve, then in a castle on the Lower Rhine, then on an estate in Mecklenburg; she saw the famous bathing resorts and the many capital cities of petty rulers; she associated with knights, with adventurers, with alchemists; she spent a few weeks in a tower in solitary confinement and attended various wedding celebrations, in the family of Count Bentheim, for instance. Wherever she went it was deemed an honour to receive her until she became a burden; everywhere honour was shown to her at first only to become neglect

in the course of time. Her hosts never failed, however, to provide her with the viaticum, the parting gift, and an escort to the next city, the next stopping-place, where the eternal wanderer was already expected. The Roman Empire was engulfed in war, cavalry troops roamed through the country in all directions, plundering and burning. At night she often saw burning villages on the edge of the horizon; the dead bodies of merchants who had been robbed often lay in the ditch beside the road; her travelling-coach often had to stop because endless numbers of peasants who had started out with their possessions blocked the way. Nothing happened to her, nobody touched her, no one stopped her. It was as though she were protected by magic since she had torn herself away from the root of her existence and left her proper sphere. She never thought beyond one day to the next, and only what was visible and tangible had any existence for her. Her fourth sister, who was married to a certain Marquis de Lionne and who was fairly intelligent, maintained

that Theodata was unable to dream and never had any dreams. As a matter of fact, the Baroness never for even a moment dèparted from the proximity of things, and none of her thoughts went beyond the strict confines of reality. For this reason there was always something hesitating and timid about her, as in a person who is walking in a narrow, damp passage and wishes to avoid brushing against the wet wall. This was also the cause of her forgetfulness, which frequently amused the people with whom she associated; but Nature in her wisdom hàd probably bestowed this upon her as a protective measure so that the wounds could heal which otherwise would have caused her delicate organism to bleed to death. It formed a wall shutting off the daily recurring reality in all directions. She retained no name, no number, no road, no face, no occurrence; everything had first to be confirmed by recurrence and become visible. She forgot from one hour to the next what she had said, what she had promised, what she had seen and experienced. She did not

know what time was; the clock was a constant source of surprise to her. She likewise knew nothing of the seasons except the change from hot to cold, from green to white, nothing except what one could feel, what one could see. Merely feeling and seeing, tasting and smelling, confined like an animal in the ever-recurring reality, without dream, longing, heaven, light or vision, she would presumably never have found her way to Ehrenberg, where her son dwelt, if her two sisters had not put their heads together and talked to the wife of the Landgrave of Hesse. The latter spoke to her very gently one day, reminded her of her duty as a mother and, having obtained her consent, made all the preparations for her return home. It was, it must be, a return home, although she had never before set foot in Ehrenberg. But her thoughts were unable to grasp that she was a mother, that she ought to be a mother.

VI

THEODATA was a late child of elderly parents. She had married at the age of eighteen. At thirty-five she still looked like a girl. But it was only her figure that gave the impression of youth. There was something rigid and immobile about her skin, as in dried flowers, and her whole manner reminded one of something that had been. She did not talk much, and when she did it was always about the same things, with the identical words and with the soulless voice of a bird. She had never thought of the Bishop, even when she did not know how she could pay the driver who demanded his money so urgently and insolently. He had been paid in full in Kassel at the beginning of her journey, but not by her, of course. She should have known it; she had merely forgotten it. With her last money she had paid her footman and her lady's-maid, whom she had discharged in Arnstein

because they refused to accompany her through the Spessart. Not only was the Spessart generally in bad repute, but in addition all sorts of vagabond soldiers had been roaming about there for some time—stray cavalrymen from Tilly's army, it was said. Upon her arrival at Ehrenberg she was conducted to the room which had been hastily prepared for her, whereupon she went to bed at once and asked for a doctor. It was deaf old Lenette who reminded her of the Bishop and it was at her urgent request that the Baroness wrote to her brother-in-law.

It was not necessary for her, as it was for almost everybody else, to shout at Lenette—not for her and not for the Young Baron Ernest. Lenette merely looked at her lips and knew what was said or asked for. They had known each other for such a long time; Lenette had been Theodata's playmate in her native castle at Bourdonnay. Nobody was able to say where she came from and who her parents were. A soldier had once deposited her at the church door; two gold Portuguese coins,

sewn in a piece of linen, were suspended from the infant's neck. That was probably more than forty years before. But Lenette did not know how old she was. She paid no attention to the calendar, and her relation to time and the passing of time was about the same as that of the Baroness. She had not seen her mistress for eight years, had not heard from her for eight years, but when the Baroness stepped out of her travelling-coach Lenette merely nodded to her in satisfaction after she had assured herself that it really was her mistress Theodata and not somebody else. She did not permit herself to ask her mistress a question, although she almost died of curiosity to know what had happened to her in all those years.

On the first day the Baroness did not leave her bed and wanted to see no one but Lenette. On the morning of the second day she arose, put on a beautiful dark dress of heavy material and wrapped herself in a heavy cloak embroidered with silver. Thus she paced up and down for a

long time. Then she listened, as if becoming aware of the deep solitude, seized a little hammer and pounded on a bell, which resounded through the castle to the most distant rooms. After a little while Lenette appeared, with a suspicious look—aimless suspicion was a result of her defective hearing—and inquired after her mistress's desire. The Baroness complained: "I feel cold, Lenette. What shall I do?" This did not surprise Lenette. The Baroness had felt cold ever since she was a child, in winter and in summer, during the day and at night, in her bed and in her bath, before the fireplace and in the sunlight. Thus it had been on the last day before their long separation, and so it still was to-day; everything, therefore, was in due order. When she said, "I feel cold, Lenette," her little face became even smaller, just as formerly; she made a wry mouth, as if about to weep, her toes turned pathetically inward. But what was Lenette to do to keep her from feeling cold? She laughed good-naturedly, started a fire in spite of the April warmth outside, brought

woollen blankets and filled the crevices in the windows with straw.

When the courier returned from Würzburg without money, the Baroness was at a loss what to do. The driver became impudent; he sat in the servants' quarters with Wallork, the steward, and complained about losing so much time. He probably saw what a poverty-stricken castle it was, how penuriously the place was managed, and that made him insolent. Theodata was already conceiving the foolish plan of going herself to the city and making remonstrances to the Bishop, when Lenette came with a radiant face, holding a bag of money in her raised hand. She had found it in the Baroness's baggage, in a little strong-box which had been in a narrow mahogany chest, among all sorts of odds and ends: wax embossments, bronzes, astrological charts, the tooth of a sea-fish, ostrich feathers, a pair of moccasins, a coral bud, field-glasses and similar things which Theodata had collected or received as gifts in the course of many years. She had forgotten about the bag

with the money, and when Lenette poured the contents on the table and sorted and counted the coins, it was a considerable sum: twelve common ducats, nine gold rose-nobles, fourteen silver thalers and thirty Franconian guldens. This put an end to their need for the time being.

Lenette became more and more thoughtful at the sight of this money; she had never known such affluence. She seemed to have many things on her mind, and after a time she came out with them. She urged the Baroness, now that she was so wealthy, to look after the damaged and dilapidated condition of the castle. No one had bothered about it and no one would until one fine day it would fall to pieces. Everything was in a state of deterioration, decay and ruin. On rainy days the rain seeped through the roof into the upper rooms and chambers. No matter how often Wallork repaired the tiles and shingles, the next storm would rip off twice the number because the rafters were decayed and the beams would retain no nails. The main door would not close, the chimneys

were caved in, the doors rattled on their hinges; broken windows had been repaired with paper and glue or replaced by boards, the door-sills were worm-eaten, the flooring was worn through, the stoves were choked up, there was dry-rot in the walls. Merry crowds of rats and mice raced about in the main hall, there was water in the cellar fathom-deep, the stable was leaning to one side and stones were missing from the enclosure of the draw-well. Of course, she didn't mean that all this was to be undertaken at once, but they ought to get workmen from the city to repair at least the roof and the chimneys, so that they would not have to live in constant fear of having all the elements of Nature breaking in on them when they lay on their beds of straw. And then there was the main hall; the hall would have to be cleaned and put into condition. Where were they to take the Bishop if he really came to call on them on Saint Walpurgis Day, as he had announced through the courier?

The Baroness would hear of nothing. She

hardly even listened to Lenette. She walked up and down and hummed to herself in a complaining tone of voice. No matter how often Lenette broached this subject again, on that and the following day, at first coaxing her, then demanding it of her, and finally reproaching her, and bewailing the defects of the building as if they were defects of her own body, the Baroness would not listen to her, but walked up and down humming to herself in a complaining tone of voice.

Then Lenette became embittered and said: "If you are unwilling to do any of these things, then at least buy the Young Baron a new suit of clothes. Just look and see what he wears, how threadbare and patched his clothes are. Just take a look at them."

Theodata paused in her walk and turned her frightened, childlike face towards Lenette. She pouted a bit. Behind her fright was the horror of that night when her six-year-old boy had been torn out of a dream, and, perhaps taking his dream with him into the waking state, had thrown his

arms around the bloated neck of his monster of a father. That came back to her as soon as she saw him. It was the recurring reality against which she struggled in blind despair as a bird beats its wings against the walls of a glass cage. Since her arrival she had seen him but twice. On the first day, after she had gone to bed, Master Molitor had inquired whether the Young Baron might pay his respects to her. Then he had come, and made a polite bow and had said very courteously: "Greetings to you, Honoured Mother." He looked at her as if she were concealed in bushes, not lying before him in a bed; and then he left again.

Then she had seen him the day before at the draw-well when she stood at the window. It was the very same draw-well from whose enclosure stones were missing. It was directly under her window, twenty-five yards away; it certainly was not more than that to the mouth of the well with its wrought-iron arch from which the bucket was suspended. He wore a threadbare and patched suit of clothes and an old leather cap over his

coal-black hair, which fell straight down over his ears and neck and only curled a bit at the ends, to be agreeable, as it were. He did not know that she was looking down and she could not see his face, which was turned towards the black aperture of the well. Whenever he made the slightest movement, she gave a start of fear. A person cannot stand for ever at the well, and when he had his fill he went away, going through the gate towards Randersacker in spite of the fact that dusk was already falling. This was one of his many mysterious walks. Frequently he did not return until the middle of the night, and then he innocently sauntered by his tutor who had been waiting for him, wringing his hands in despair.

When Lenette spoke of him, the Baroness again gave a start. "No, he shall have nothing; I will buy him nothing," she said in a harsh and determined voice. "All your pleading is in vain." Lenette approached her cringingly, extended her hands like two receptacles and cried: "You will not even give him a holiday-garment, not even a

coat? And are you not ashamed of yourself, Your Grace, now that you have a bag full of gold?" The Baroness answered: "No, he shall not even have a coat." Lenette became angry. She went to the table, reached into the drawer containing the purse, took it out and said: "Then at least give me a thaler so that I can buy him a pair of new shoes." As soon as the Baroness saw that Lenette had taken possession of the purse, she rushed up to her, wrested it from her and said obstinately: "No, you shall not buy him any new shoes. Leave my money alone. And to show you that it is not because of the money, I shall throw it down into the well." Saying that, she opened the window and hurled the purse down, before Lenette, crying out in her distress, could prevent it. She had aimed so well in her mad zeal that the purse fell directly into the dark mouth of the well.

"What have you done, Your Grace?" Lenette whispered, awed, and crossed herself.

"Leave the room," the Baroness said, with a wave of her hand.

When Lenette had sadly left the room, Theodata sank down on a chair, covered her face with both hands and began to weep. It seemed as if her tears would never cease to flow. An hour passed and still she wept as if the person most dear to her had died, if only she had had a person most dear to her. Oh, the real, the nigh, the now! How real and actual everything about her was! There was no yesterday, no to-morrow, not even a to-day; there was only a now, and as soon as that had passed there was another now. Nothing but holes into which one fell, one after the other, and each as deep as the draw-well.

While she was still weeping, the door opened and Baron Ernest came in, slowly, cautiously, as it were. He had been crossing the entrance-hall, when he noticed Lenette in the twilight. The latter was on her knees before Theodata's door. Without being able to hear her, she surmised that the Baroness was sitting in her room, weeping. It must be so; she must now be weeping in there, if the whole world was not out of joint.

As she was anxiously pressing her ear against the door, she felt someone touching her shoulder. Looking up, she saw Baron Ernest; she arose, drew him to the staircase and informed him that his mother had dropped a bag of gold into the well. She made it appear as if it had happened inadvertently, and explained that she was now sitting in her room grieving over it. Lenette desired Baron Ernest to go in and speak to his mother so that she might be released from the uncanny torpor which to Lenette was nothing but the work of the devil.

And she had her way; Ernest did as the old nurse suggested. Softly he walked over to the chair on which the Baroness was crouching and for a time looked down at her thoughtfully; then he placed his hand on her shoulder in the same way he had touched Lenette outside and said with his pleasing, deep, boyish voice: "Console yourself, Honoured Mother; you must not worry about that bag of money. It is a misfortune only if it makes you weep. Stop crying." With these

cheering words he squatted down on the floor beside her, calmly looked up to her with his eyes, which were as brown and big as chestnuts, and repeated: "Stop crying. That makes one old and ugly, and you are young and beautiful. If you will stop crying, I will tell you a story. . . . Just listen to me ; I will tell you a story. . . ."

VII

THE earth's crust as well as every fruit of the earth has various layers, each one of which bears witness to a previous state and holds out promise of a new one to come. In accordance with the idea which Nature pursues in all its creations, the human soul likewise has numerous distinct and yet interrelated strata, especially as regards its secret growth and its subconscious life. In many persons this dream-life is directly beneath the surface and vanishes as soon as it comes into contact with the realities of everyday life. In others again it strikes its roots much deeper, so that it is much more difficult to bring it to the surface. In this respect each person has his own characteristic law implanted within him. In a few exceptional persons it has burrowed down to such depths that all forces assailing it are unable to affect it. Such a person was born whole only in body; his

mind and spirit dwell outside the world, above it or below it.

Perhaps this was the reason why Baron Ernest remained almost speechless until his sixth year. After the death of his father and the separation from his mother, he could make himself understood only concerning the most necessary things; what he could not express with his face and eyes remained unexpressed. His change of abode from the noisy confusion of streets in the Imperial city to the solitude of Franconia seemed scarcely to affect his inner life; he seemed scarcely to notice it. At that time Master Onno Molitor was frequently assailed by doubts whether his pupil had not been weak-minded from birth. During his lessons the boy stared in front of him with a vacant gaze; he smiled when there was nothing to smile at, and marvelled when there was nothing to marvel at. At the age of eight he still spoke of himself in the third person, giving himself names he had invented or perhaps picked up somewhere, such as Little Chafer, Shadow Wisp,

or Knee Hopper. When he squatted in a corner, brooding to himself, and then, as if awakening, muttered incoherent sentences, it often seemed as if his mind had retained concepts and his eye images from early childhood: colourful and pompous events, gardens, palaces, torchlight parades, streets crowded with cavalcades, beautifully adorned women, the solemn interior of a church, a hall radiant with lights, but also gloomy and horrible things; and it seemed as if he were struggling with these images deep down in the bottomless depths, as if he were vainly pursuing them with unsteady steps and stammering words.

In addition to this, his deaf nurse Lenette, who was deeply touched in those early years by his being so forsaken, not infrequently took him on her lap in the evening, sitting before the fireplace in which logs were burning while restless shadows passed across the sooty walls and the arched ceiling. Then she told him stories, droll, gruesome, romantic stories of bewitched princes and enchanted princesses, of cave spirits and ghosts, of cairns

and Jews' stones, of Fridiger and of the scales of Bamberg, of shoes made of buns and of the buttermilk tower. At that time he had been unable to comprehend these stories—so at least it had seemed. He squatted on Lenette's lap like a gnarled block of wood and with a stick childishly poked at the bricks in the fire-place. The stories related to him were no more to him than a breath over his eyelids.

But appearances were deceptive; the fantastic element in these colourful and mysterious stories made a deep impression upon him. His soul absorbed it and preserved it, and when he played his peculiar games it came to the surface, as blades of grass shoot up out of the ground in February. He made everything come to life: the apples in the apple-room, the silver ring on his finger, the soap bubbles on a blade of straw, the dripping gutter, the spinning-wheel and the ladle. He had conversations with all things and especially with animals; with the cow and the cat, the stork and the swallow. He made signs to them to which

they responded, and he knew charms and various incantations for them. He remained for hours at whatever he was occupied with, and it always required an outside influence to take him away from it, so that there were no end of admonitions and punishments on the part of his tutor, and of intercessions and lamentations on the part of Lenette.

With great zeal he collected acorns and dry berries and put them in his bed. At night, before going to sleep, when the blanket over his raised knees formed an enormous mountain range with gorges and valleys, he removed them to remote, rocky regions with his busy fingers, each one of which was a wanderer lost in the snow. His breath meanwhile was a hurricane and the stretching out of his legs the effect of divine anger which transformed the mountain into an open field. After such amusements it was always late before he fell asleep.

There was too much to do, to behold, to order within him. In November when storms made the

rafters tremble, and in January when the wolves outside yelped, in May when the moon's disc with its yellowish glow passed across his window and the threads in his bedspread seemed, in the quivering moonlight, like countless tiny little feet trying to run away and unable to do so, then he had to hearken and dream and play and think of the stars and wait for the earth spirits. Everything became transformed as soon as he called it by name; everything became magnified when he heard it and assumed boundless proportions when he heard it again; everything was different when he took it into his hands than when he saw it. The puddle of rainwater in the courtyard became a vast body of water; his conception of it was so overwhelmingly vivid that it almost made him shudder; an instant later the body of water was a living being with a face and a voice.

No sooner had he heard of the first man than he crawled into the mouldy wooden stable to join the cows; here he was Adam in Paradise, dwelling in blessed and peaceful understanding with lions,

serpents, deer and bison. The anvil resounded from Wallork's blows; he ran to Lenette with raised eyebrows, put his mouth to her ear and informed her that Master Grimmerlein was outside demanding his tribute of blood. Who was Master Grimmerlein? A master by the grace of Baron Ernest. And what was the tribute of blood? No one could say, not even he himself. Lenette laughed in his face. She soon acquired the habit of ridiculing him because of his fabrications. She grinned when he merely addressed her, and as soon as he opened his mouth she said dryly: "I don't believe it." This provoked him, and he surpassed himself in inventing horrifying and strange experiences which he claimed to have had, floridly exaggerating them. He soon acquired such skill that he succeeded more and more often in making a dupe of Lenette. With secret delight he felt how at first she doubted, then gradually succumbed to his words and finally was filled with fear and gripped with expectation, even though she defiantly said: "I don't believe it."

Once he had reached this stage, he tried his skill on Steward Wallork, on the shepherds, the teamsters and hunters, and finally he also ventured to try it on Master Molitor. He ventured it, because little by little he had acquired so much polish and fluency of expression that he himself became intoxicated with it, as a swimmer's boldness and endurance is increased by his own agility. Every day he found new words and designations, qualities, colours, conditions, occurrences. He was so overwhelmed with words that it seemed to him as if he were standing under a waterfall which took his breath away. They comprised all things between heaven and earth; one could jumble them as one did stones in play; each one signified something, each one concealed towering events; there were infinite possibilities of combining and joining them, and this was a source of manifold suffering and joy.

At a certain period he began to look through the books and folios of his tutor when the latter was absent; the desire to read came over him.

Even unintelligible dissertations and philosophical treatises were to him imbued with the iridescent and changing colours of the rainbow, and his spirit derived nourishment from them. The mere symbols or formulas were often sufficient; he broke them up, took what he was looking for and found (even when it was not there), and threw the husks away. But when he saw engravings and illustrations, a knight, a winged dragon, an angel on a cloud, or Pharaoh honouring Joseph, then he became alternately hot and cold; at once he himself was the knight or the dragon, noble Joseph or, breathless with happiness, the tranquil angel. Then he sat in Wallork's room, and while the latter listened in astonishment told him that a man in golden armour had walked up to him in the great hall upstairs, had called himself Prince of the Orient and commanded him to wander for seven years and seven days towards the East, and that at the end of this period he would have a great experience. To the shepherds and hunters he related the story of a grey-bearded old man who was imprisoned in

the dungeon of Castle Rothenstein; one could hear him call and groan at midnight, and once the old man had confided to him that he knew a buried treasure, but that if the Bishop heard of it he would have him killed. If the people shook their heads incredulously or looked perplexed, he described the prisoner's face, demeanour and speech so accurately and in such detail, captured the imagination of his auditors so skilfully, that these unsophisticated persons were at a loss what to make of it; and they spread this report throughout the countryside, although later it turned out to be too fanciful even for these superstitious people.

Emboldened by experiment and practice, he tried his skill on Master Molitor in more concrete fashion. One day he purloined an old parchment with beautifully illuminated initials. It was a very rare copy and Master Onno valued it highly. He had purchased it from an Augustinian monk for a small sum. The Young Baron was aware of this fact. When his tutor returned from a visit to Provost Lieblein in Würzburg, Ernest told him

with an astonishing air of truthfulness that the monk had called, had made threatening gestures and had gruffly demanded the immediate surrender of the parchment; he had sold it to Master Molitor, to be sure, but he did not know that the possessor of it had free access to all the kings of the earth as well as to the Holy Father in Rome at any time during the day or night; that this person furthermore could travel through any country in which war and pestilence raged with complete security of body and life. Baron Ernest maintained that he had at first professed complete ignorance, but that because of the monk's desperate actions, his endless pleadings and violent threats, he had been betrayed into showing him the place where the miraculous parchment was to be found. The monk had thereupon taken the parchment and disappeared.

Master Onno listened to this strange report, frowning impatiently; the veins on his temples became darkly swollen with anger. He questiond the Young Baron sharply time and again, stepped up to his bed at night and roused him from sleep

to overwhelm him with questions; he remonstrated with him that nobody in the castle had seen the monk at the hour stated, pointed out to him how contradictory his statements were, harassed him by being alternately severe and lenient, and in the end even struck him with the iron rod. It was all in vain. The Young Baron's only reply to all this was a puzzled expression, as if he could not comprehend these doubts. Daily he produced new and more convincing evidence, and more than that, he even spun out the thread of the story in such an unabashed manner that it was exceeded only by his constantly increasing, strangely pleasing eloquence.

One morning he rushed into the tutor's room, pale and excited, and announced that he had met the monk, who, whispering mysterious words, had lured him into the woods, and there had demanded an oath from the boy not to betray him, in which case he promised that he would return the parchment. But on the third day, when the moon was rising, Master Molitor would also have

to swear an oath under the big poplar near the toll-gatherer's house, that he would discontinue his search for the thief and not make any complaint against him. Upon entering his room again he would then find the magic scroll in the old place.

Master Molitor angrily refused to perform this hocus-pocus, for he was a man enlightened much beyond his time, a real philosopher and a disciple of Aristotle. The Young Baron, however, pleaded so successfully in his impetuous and coaxing manner that Master Molitor promised to do what was desired of him, merely to see what would come of it. He quietly resolved to get to the bottom of the Young Baron's inscrutable doings. He was somewhat angry with himself for being so completely vanquished and ensnared by the manner and speech of this twelve-year-old boy, more than he had ever been by any human being. When the hour arrived to take the oath, the moon did not rise as had been so solemnly prophesied, but a fierce storm raged; the rain poured down in streams. The tutor pretended

that this did not frighten him in the least. Ernest, on the other hand, on whose mind thunder and lightning always made a powerful impression, was somewhat hesitant in his manner and seemed wrapped in thought. While they both stood in the gateway, looking out into the raging storm, a flash of lightning illumined the castle-yard, the well, the stone wall and a stretch of forest in the distance with a brimstone-coloured light.

The Young Baron recoiled. Then Master Molitor placed his hand on his shoulder and said: "In the presence of the elements, Young Baron, will you now maintain as truthful what you have told me? Speak and be honest with me." The boy looked down before him in a dreamy and defiant way. Suddenly, at a second flash, he raised his eyes, sparkling like two black jewels, and replied: "I would have told you anyhow, once the story had been concluded. But a story must have an ending, mustn't it?" His voice did not express consciousness of guilt; it contained an appeal and was self-assertive. "How is that?"

stammered Master Onno. "A story, you say? Not a lie, not deceitfulness, not spiteful deception, but a story?" The boy raised his hands and said amid the rumblings of thunder: "Yes, I have told you a story, that's all." The tutor was silent. "And are you not sorry that it has no ending and yet is ended?" asked the Young Baron confidingly.

The tutor, deserted by all the spirits of pedagogy, looked at the Young Baron, speechless. When he came into his room, the parchment was back again where it always had been.

VIII

From this day forth the inventions and inspirations of the boy's imagination gradually became detached from reality and the persons of his environment, just as the ivy rises from the ground when it is given a support on which it can grow upwards. His one and only interest was to tell stories; very likely he did not know or suspect, until that stormy night, what a story really was. Now he began to realize that a story could not be imposed on the humdrum life of every day, any more than one would use a bright piece of cloth to patch a threadbare garment, but that the story itself would have to be a beautiful garment, and the person who made it a skilful tailor, and the person for whom it was made someone who would look well in it and who would derive pleasure from it.

A long time passed, perhaps a year, during

which he remained rather quiet. It seemed that he was observing many things and meditating much. He constantly besought Master Onno to procure books for him in which he could read how people live; not the people about him, but strange people in distant countries, Turks, Swedes and Englishmen, and also those in the New World from which gold-laden ships arrived, as he had heard. He wished to know about King Henry of France and his assassin; the tutor had once spoken of him, and the Young Baron's active imagination formed image after image from the mere reference to him. Master Onno yielded to his entreaties and gave him a Spanish book on chivalry and a description of a tournament in Cambrai. Then Ernest lay on his stomach throughout half the night by the oil-lamp which always burned in his room, because even at the age of thirteen he was so afraid of darkness that he had convulsions whenever he had to go to sleep in the dark or when he awoke in it. Then he lay there with glowing cheeks, his rigid index-finger gliding over the page, line for

line, and his whole body covered with perspiration. His tutor lost control over him; he looked on, not knowing what to do.

He was at his wits' end when it suddenly became impossible to keep the boy in the house; he ran away as soon as his lessons were ended. Snow and rain did not deter him and he disregarded his insufficient clothing. He roamed through the woods to the north and passed through the vineyards down into the valley of the Main. He soon knew all the villages and estates within a radius of thirty miles. He joined company with all sorts of vagabonds and sat with the peasants in the fields, or in the barns when they threshed. He went to all the annual fairs and became enamoured with gipsies and merry-andrews; he became aware of the bitter need by which people are oppressed; he heard their lamentations, their sighs, their hopes and their prayers; he saw injustice and dissimulation, violence and death; he put all these things together like so many little weights, which together make a big weight, and

which are placed on one side of the scale of fate in order to balance the other and to make the indicator register in the centre.

But the outcome of all this was a desire to tell about a world which was different from the bad, sad and ugly one which he saw and in which he beheld so many people labouring in unmitigable sorrow; of a world within him like a flower-bed in a garden of which not a soul was aware.

It began on a summer's evening, the day before Corpus Christi; he was walking through the village of Günthersleben and heard shouting and brawling from a booth where chickens were being roasted for the holiday. Coming nearer, he noticed a number of people. A woman, the owner of the booth, was screaming at a man who was held by a few young fellows. It turned out that the man had stolen one of the fowls that had been plucked but not yet roasted and was suspended from a bar. The woman spied him just as he was on the point of fleeing; several children standing about ran after him and stopped him. He looked very des-

titute and was probably tormented by unspeakable hunger, for he had utilized the short distance, even while running, to rip the rooster open and to devour of the bloody inside whatever came to hand. When the wailing woman afterwards inspected the damage, the heart was really the only thing missing; the hungry thief had eaten the heart. The children who had pursued him, boys and girls from nine to twelve years of age, drew back, startled. Ernest stepped up to them and said: "That man is not feeling very happy; when a person eats a heart, he is doomed to forget everything that ever happened to him." The children looked at him curiously. He smiled and continued: "I will tell you why that is; I will tell you the story of the man who ate his dog's heart."

He sat down under a nearby linden-tree; the children gathered about him, and the longer he talked the more tensely they hung upon his words. It was a comparatively simple story, based on the incident they had just witnessed, and supported by the old popular belief of which he

had heard that the eating of a heart induces forgetfulness. But he invented suitable instances of a young man who is unable to remember his parents' house, of a hermit who preserves the hearts of many people and animals in bottles, of a sylvan spirit who annually causes much damage by devastating a certain province and to whom they give wine containing the pulverized heart of a pious maiden, which causes him to forget his way so that he can be captured in the thicket. All of this was beautifully woven together by the inspiration of the moment, forming an elusive vision, to the recital of which his youthful auditors listened with rapture.

Once he had had this experience of having the shining eyes of faithful, grateful and deeply touched auditors fixed upon him, he desired to have it repeated again and again. He soon had an audience in all the surrounding towns, villages and hamlets, from Klingenberg and Wörth down to Esselbach and Tiefenstein, from Rothenbuch and Heimbuchenthal to Hafenlohr and Mark-

theidenfeld. His followers ran to greet him as soon as they caught sight of him in the distance; many of them perhaps had only become familiar with this feeling of impatient expectation through him. They greeted him with joyful laughter, surrounded him and brought him pears, grapes, gingerbread and toffee. He sat down on a garden-wall, under a tree, or in inclement weather in a corner of some barn, in a boatman's hut on the River Main, or under a bridge, the others forming a circle about him. Then they would say: Tell us a story, Young Baron, about little Tom Thumb; about the star maiden; about the brownies; about the wild huntsman; about the gnomes; about Eppela Gaila; about the hoard of Rothenstein; about the giant Hidde. Each person had his special wish, but they came to an agreement, or rather they became silent, when the Young Baron began, slowly and didactically, with roguish circumstantiality, and with a deep breath that foreshadowed horrible things.

He seldom related what his tense and excited

listeners demanded, stories which had already become part of their mental possessions, so that they knew every part of them in advance and looked forward to the sudden turning-point, despite which fact they were just as deeply moved by them. He himself was attracted by the new; from fables and legends, from what he had seen or dreamed, he produced, as if by magic, unheard-of stories, as though his mind were centuries old and his memory stocked with all the experiences of the human race. He could ramble along in such endless fashion that darkness often overtook them without any of his auditors becoming aware of it. To them it was light when his story was happy and dark when it was sad; it was not a question of actual day and night. Occasionally a little girl was heard sighing or a boy weeping, or they all laughed heartily when the occasion arrived, when the villain received his just punishment or the treacherous dwarf his deserved chastisement. They were all of one heart, and one heard the collective heart beating joyfully when the unfortunate son

who had been robbed of his inheritance by envious brothers, finally attained happiness and position, after overcoming many trials and magic deceptions.

There were certain characters which he himself had invented and which always recurred in various plots: Gustav, the piper; Margaret, the blind young lady of noble birth; Helmweiss, the knight-errant; Siderlist, the magician. When he mentioned one of these names, his hearers drew a deep breath and bent forward, for each one knew that now something extraordinary was about to happen. Sometimes the parents and relatives became worried and started out to search for their children. Then it not infrequently happened that instead of terminating the late entertainment, they themselves sat down, enchanted by the Young Baron's gift of speech. They had never before heard anyone speak in that manner. Who had ever truly talked to them? What did they know about fate—they who knew barely the shadow of their own? What had they learned of the world's mystery, of invisible messengers, of diamond

palaces, of the forces concealed in insignificant plants, in the blackthorn and the market-thorn, in the hazel-bush and the dandelion? If they had any inkling of it, it was only from the harmful side; that there is another dispensation bestowing happiness and deliverance, they neither knew nor believed. Now they discovered it. How phantom-like to see it before their very eyes, image on image; to think that this was possible; that they could actually see King Henry of France, and his beautiful queen, a fairy, seizing the sceptre and making the sun which had been buried in a mountain-gorge since the monstrous murder rise again, and the nobles who were going to Court to avenge their lord. It was only now that they began to comprehend the world that they learned to understand the kind of life princes led.

In a short time it came about that not only the children followed his every footstep, wherever he made his appearance, but he also had a definite following among adults. To be sure, there were only about a dozen persons, but they

were always near him and managed in the strangest manner to join him as soon as he left Castle Ehrenberg; there was Silberhans, for instance, a fiddler from Veitshöchheim, an ever-tipsy student from Schwanfeld, a former tanner from Würzburg, and various others.

In the course of time enough of these things were reported to Master Molitor to make him angry and worried, and he lived in constant fear because of the responsibility he bore. He had to live in daily expectation of being called to account for the mad pranks of his pupil. At that time it was not only unusual, but actually disgraceful, for a person, not to speak of a nobleman's son, to roam about on highways and in villages. Whoever set one foot before the other on the plain earth discredited himself and forfeited his honour. It was useless to tell this to the Young Baron; admonitions and chastisements were of no avail. One might just as well have tried to tie a young eagle to a signpost with cotton twine.

IX

When the Bishop and his chancellor arrived at Ehrenberg on the designated day, in a calash drawn by four horses, they were received by Master Molitor and escorted with many bows and obeisances into the large hall where no guests had been received for decades. With the aid of Lenette and a few hired servants, Wallork had, with great difficulty, cleaned out the dust, the cobwebs and the litter made by the mice and put the place into a half-way respectable condition. The tutor made excuses for the Baroness, as she had not expected her distinguished callers before the afternoon and was still occupied with her toilet. Master Onno showed considerable embarrassment when he was asked about the Young Baron. The latter, he replied, had disappeared since early morning, although he had repeatedly been told, and again only the day before, of the arrival of His Eminence, the

Bishop. Her Grace, the Baroness, was disconsolate and worried about it and would not fail to express her regrets to His Eminence.

The Bishop was tired from the journey and the jolting of the calash on the bad roads, soaked from the rain, and sat down in a broken-backed arm-chair covered with threadbare green velvet. Completely ignoring the tutor's inferior position with respect to the Baroness, he remarked rather gruffly that he could not understand why she should now suddenly have occasion to worry about her son, when she had succeeded for eight long years in restraining her motherly fears. The tutor cast down his eyes and ventured to reply that he had given a truthful account of the situation. Then he lowered his voice and bent his head forward like a cock spying a worm, adding that he had to admit that in his opinion there had not as yet been established a relationship between the Baroness and the young man which would be in keeping with such a close tie.

Pater Gropp had meanwhile also taken a seat

on a likewise dilapidated chair. He reverted to the still unexplained absence of the Young Baron and asked sharply in amazement: "Disappeared? You say, disappeared? How is that possible? How can that be? You permit that? And you report it as though he were guilty of no more than a mistake in his exercises? Please to tell us the plain truth about this honourable Young Baron. I think we have a right to demand it; the Bishop has an especial right to know it."

Pater Gropp must have desired the Bishop to receive a detailed and comprehensive account, for he himself was sufficiently informed. He had concerned himself with the boy's conduct in his own way, partly by having rumours regarding the boy reported to him, partly by cross-examining the tutor whom he had repeatedly summoned in the preceding months with this end in view. Once he had even gone to Ehrenberg incognito. On this occasion he had observed the Young Baron carefully, and the mysterious aversion which the boy had aroused in him ever

since he knew of him had been confirmed and intensified.

Master Molitor was startled by this imperious demand. He had privately admitted and confessed more to Pater Gropp than had been his intention, and being strictly straightforward himself he was unable to see through the Jesuit's manœuvres. He began to stammer and to say something about the boy's nature being difficult to deal with. He placed his hand on his breast and swore that his pupil was fundamentally sound, although there were certain characteristics contrary to a normal constitution which, like weeds in a cultivated field, overgrew the precious grain. Pater Gropp wrinkled his brows darkly and angrily cut short this rhetorical bombast. Would the tutor please to come to the point! What sort of characteristics did he have in mind? It could not be expected of the Bishop that he should be obliged to discover the root of the matter for himself out of all these misleading extenuations. In what particular respect did he find fault with the Young Baron? Out with

it, Master Molitor; His Eminence, the Bishop, is able to bear the most distressing report and will consider what is to be done to remedy the evil that has crept in. What is the trouble, then? His untruthfulness, about which so many complaints have already been made? His irrepressible tendency to all sorts of fabulizing, misrepresentation and wicked invention, and to frivolous pranks? His inclination towards radicalism and vagabondage or his desire to debase himself by associating with all sorts of disreputable people, attending vulgar entertainments, loafing about in taverns and at annual fairs? Or something else, such as his aversion towards every kind of religious instruction, often reaching the point of impudent mockery? Or his secret occupation with godless pamphlets, books of adventure and poetry; his indolence in the execution of everything profitable; his unseemly defiance at every summons to order, duty and morality? This, or something even more reprehensible, more pregnant with danger?

Thus the extent of his hitherto concealed know-

ledge was suddenly revealed by Pater Gropp before the ears of the morose-looking Bishop as though his very object were to take him by surprise. At every one of his accusations, put in the form of a question, Master Molitor broke down a trifle more. He did not have the courage to admit the boy's transgressions in the gross, first in view of his years of pedagogical effort which would thereby have been characterized as fruitless, secondly because he feared the loss of his livelihood and position, and thirdly because he felt a secret affection for his pupil. Besides, the Jesuit's withering harshness vexed him very much.

On the other hand, he could not deny what everybody in the entire bishopric knew about the Young Baron of Ehrenberg, and what he himself had told the accuser in his distress or merely out of loquacious self-importance. But as two pairs of severe eyes waited for his answer, an answer had to be given. The tips of his fingers pressed together, with hunched shoulders, he remarked that these were possibly conditions of

a pathological nature, intermittent tribulations, a fever of the brain, so to speak. An insidious habit undoubtedly existed; but after mature consideration he could not but hesitate to designate this as mendacity. Still less could he persuade himself to brand it as a vice, as he had at no time renounced the hope of improvement, whereas vice in the judgment of all competent psychologists was something fixed and final. If he considered all the evidence against the Young Baron, one could not really speak of mendacious depravity, but rather of an incomprehensibly mysterious dreaminess of mind, not to say absence of mind, a confinement of the soul as in somnambulists and an abrogation of the ordinary laws governing it.

A glance at the Jesuit's face frightened the tutor and made him feel that he had said too much—too much for the peace and freedom of his pupil as well as too much for his own safety. He would gladly have recalled his rash words, but it was too late. The Jesuit's figure seemed to be growing taller and more rigid; on his conical

forehead a yellow light seemed to flare, and his eyes, which were like two black holes filled with an iridescent liquid, had an expression of gloomy satisfaction.

"You have heard it, Bishop," he said coldly, and that was all. The Bishop angrily fixed his eyes upon the unfortunate Molitor and cried in his shrill little voice: "I call that silly nonsense. You may be sure that you will be taken at your word and that this den of vice will be thoroughly fumigated." Master Molitor, in consternation, stood silent before the two men, when a door creaked in the rear of the hall. The Baroness entered with a vacant smile which was half-sweet and half-ceremonious. She was strangely adorned. She wore a parrot-green Spanish shawl with fringes over a pale-blue velvet dress with a ruff and lace-sleeves. Five strings of pearls with five golden clasps in the centre passed over her still youthful, closely laced bust. On her head she wore a cap of pearls, under which her flaxen-yellow hair flowed down upon her shoulders.

She looked about uncertainly and then tripped up to the Bishop, who gazed at her in sinister astonishment. After a respectful bow she kissed the indifferently extended hand of the Prince of the Church. Then she stepped back a pace, the ceremonious expression disappeared from her face, and she looked about contemptuously in the cheerless hall which she had never before entered. With an aristocratic wave of her hand, which expressed regret and silent accusation, as though it were beneath her dignity to justify herself for such an environment, she asked to be forgiven for her belated appearance. She had had a bad night; she never could sleep at Ehrenberg anyhow; the bed was too hard, the pillows were too hard, the wind was blowing through the windows and the stillness was interrupted by uncanny noises. At no place had she ever suffered want as here, living under a defective roof and subsisting on turnips, goat's cheese and cheap sour wine. What magnificent banquets had been given in her honour, how many brilliant hunts and princely

pageants; how much gold had passed through her fingers, how many trinkets had been presented to her, how many great and famous men had paid homage to her!

"Oh, the world is a glorious place if only one really knows it, my dear brother-in-law and Bishop," she exclaimed, with eyes ecstatically turned upward, while her little, old, childlike face was pale as a sheet, so that something of despair gleamed through her vain and boastful manner.

The Bishop and the Jesuit looked at each other with eyes full of meaning, and the former reluctantly remarked: "Then the only thing that surprises me is that you did not remain where your lot was so fortunate."

The Baroness looked at him firmly and replied: "There is a time for everything, for joy as well as for misery."

The expression on her face again changed, and with animation in her voice she asked the Bishop not to hold it against her for having approached

him through her messenger for a loan; she had meanwhile become aware of the impropriety of her request, of the multitude of obligations which already existed. If she had waited merely a day, it would have been unnecessary for her to molest him, as a whole bag full of gold had been found in her baggage. Landgrave Ludwig had personally handed her this at her departure. Lenette had discovered the bag; she herself had forgotten about it; nor was this surprising, for so much love and tender care had been bestowed upon her there that she had paid no real attention to details. Again and again she reverted to the fact that out yonder, among the great of this world, she had been pampered and spoiled, and again and again one sensed her secret disconsolation behind her praises.

If that were the case, grumbled the Bishop, and if she had actually landed at Ehrenberg laden with riches, why, then she could henceforth take the expenses of the household upon her own shoulders; then it would merely devolve upon

him to provide stricter discipline for his nephew. He cast an annihilating glance at the tutor, who had slunk into a corner and who would rather have been invisible.

"With your nephew you may deal at your discretion," the Baroness cried, almost scornfully; "perhaps that is his fate, that he must first discover where he belongs, whether to you or to me or to neither of us. But how can I keep house here when the vermin drop into the dishes on the table, and how can I defray expenses when there isn't enough left of all the money to buy myself a rag?"

The Bishop asked darkly: "But what have you done with the bag full of gold?"

Then the Baroness laughed aloud and replied: "I threw it down the well."

The Bishop looked at Pater Gropp. The latter, with lowered eyes, bowed his head just a trifle so that it was scarcely perceptible, and an evil smile twitched about the horizontal slit of his mouth.

Master Molitor had meanwhile stepped up to the window and caught sight of Baron Ernest in the courtyard below. He had not come alone; in the gateway stood a few of his followers, Silberhans, Batsch, also a piper from Ochsenfurt and half a dozen boys and girls. All of these followed him with curious and surprised eyes, with the same curious and surprised eyes with which Master Onno observed him from above. The latter's astonished exclamation, "There's our Young Baron," uttered in an undertone, caused the Baroness and the Bishop likewise to rush to the window. The boy seemed completely transformed; he wore a blue page's uniform with silk stockings and buckle shoes and a flat cap with white feathers. It could be readily seen that the suit was not new and that it was not tailored according to his measurements; it flapped over his chest and around his legs, and his shoes looked as though they had not been worn for a long time. Nevertheless, there was something so princely about his appearance that Wallork and Lenette,

who had rushed out of the servants' door and were just in time to see him mount the moss-grown flight of steps, stared after him with open mouths.

A moment later he entered the hall, but instead of greeting those assembled there, he remained shyly standing at the door. He had meant to greet his uncle, the Bishop, in a manner befitting a nobleman. On his way he had bethought himself of the proper forms and words, but now he failed to do it. A slight shudder seemed to be passing through his body. It was a mysterious feeling, not clear to himself, although he gave it direction when he slowly moved his eyes to the place where Pater Gropp stood, mute and silent.

"Why don't you speak, Ernest? Why don't you bow to His Eminence?" Master Onno murmured in his distress. The boy obeyed, bowed and came in hesitatingly.

"Who has decked him out like that?" the Baroness asked in a whisper, speaking more to herself than to the boy or his tutor. Her face had an expression as if there were something uncanny

and tormenting to her in his demeanour, his face, his gestures. She felt as she had felt shortly before when he had offered to tell her a story; she had run out of the room as soon as he had begun his first sentence, horrified that he was standing there, that he spoke, spoke to *her* with such reality, that he said mother with such reality. . . .

The boy, unabashed, fixed his shining eyes on the Bishop's face. He had taken off his cap and was holding it in his hands.

"My mother is surprised to see me here in this beautiful garment, but I did not wish to appear before you as an indigent Young Baron, Honoured Uncle," he began, with his bewitching smile, which made his snow-white teeth even brighter and increased the attraction of his olive complexion. "I always have been an indigent Young Baron and I suppose I will always remain one, but in order to do homage to you and because our Lenette was so sorrowful about the inadequacy of my garments, I went to Heidingsfeld to Count Ortenstein and begged him to help me, as he was

wealthy and had five sons, one of whom could perhaps present me with a doublet. The Count at first laughed when I put my request to him and wanted to send me on my way again. Then his oldest son, the Young Baron Bernhard, remarked: 'That's the Young Baron of Ehrenberg who knows those funny stories; let him tell us some of his stories; then he shall have a doublet.' Thereupon the old Count laughed even harder and said: 'All right, Young Baron, sit down and tell us a story, and if we like it you shall have a page's jacket and shoes and stockings besides.' I did, and talked myself into a beautiful garment."

He seemed immoderately proud of his feat. There was an expression of happiness on his features, as though he had rescued a lost province for the emperor. Everyone who saw and heard him could not but credit his performance at once. Master Onno was worried and shook his head, but nevertheless could not resist the charm and the innocent cheerfulness of his speech. The Baroness stood there, as though she were counting

the holes and rents in the tapestry. Her ears were blood-red and her lips pale. Pater Gropp raised his lids for an instant and cast a darkly inquisitive sidelong glance at the Young Baron. He rubbed his fingers together and turned to the Bishop, inquiring whether he did not wish to partake of some food, since they had all that was needed in their calash. The Baroness pretended not to notice this disregard of her duty and privilege as hostess. The Bishop did not reply, but took a few paces until he stood before the Young Baron. For a time he seemed unable to find the right word; then he asked, as if absent-minded, almost embarrassed: "And what did you tell them then? What sort of a story was it that they rewarded so magnanimously, the Ortensteins? They're not usually so liberal, the Ortensteins."

Ernest nodded and smiled, as though he understood perfectly this curiosity, and he answered with a touch of roguishness: "It was the beautiful story of the maiden Ilse, who fled to the Brocken with her betrothed during the great flood. Then

the rock on which they just happened to stand opened up and both of them, embracing each other, plunged into the waters. Even to-day she opens the Ilsenstein every morning to bathe in the River Ilse. It is not vouchsafed to many to see her, but whoever knows her sings her praises. And so it happened to a poor charcoal-burner; and what happened to him, that's the real story, Honoured Uncle." The Bishop turned around to Pater Gropp and said in a husky, gulping voice: "All right, we'll take our luncheon here, Gropp; the Young Baron shall keep us company and tell us the story too." The Jesuit opened his eyes wide and did not move from the spot. It was only after a considerable time that he seemed to have understood the order.

X

Two hours later Ernest sat in the Bishop's carriage, by the side of his uncle, on the way to Würzburg. This had come about with unusual swiftness and not under auspices such as Pater Gropp would have desired. Not a word was said of harsher discipline, of placing him in a monastic school or a strict seminary, or even of boarding and lodging him with a clerical professor in Würzburg or Bamberg. Not a word of all this. The Bishop had declared: "You will come with me and live in my house; I shall provide for all your bodily and other needs." The Young Baron was not to remain another day at Castle Ehrenberg. Orders would be given as to what was to be done with Master Molitor. Necessary instructions would also be forthcoming regarding the Baroness and her further stay at the castle. He scarcely allowed the Young Baron time to take leave of his old teacher

and his deaf nurse Lenette, who was dissolved in tears. He took leave of his mother by bowing silently to her and then apparently waiting for something. What he was waiting for could not be fathomed. He waited in vain; the Baroness neither spoke to him nor looked at him. She gazed down at her hands, smiled foolishly and stealthily, remained silent, and looked as if silence were precious to her.

The Bishop's impetuous haste exactly resembled that of a man who is seeking a safe place for a stolen treasure. His face revealed nothing, even when he desired to express some inner emotion, because his inner life was too impoverished and nothing could reach the surface. The people about him, therefore, were in the dark as to his motives and designs. Or perhaps they merely failed to recognize them, for the same reason that a person solving a riddle rejects the very simplicity of a solution, because, after all, the simple is the incomprehensible. He did not take his eyes off the boy. When in the course of conversation he

looked at the boy's youthful mouth, his slack lips reformed the words in senile, absurd fashion. Once, in the excitement of speaking, Ernest absent-mindedly placed his right hand on the Bishop's sleeve. He did so with childlike familiarity which nevertheless seemed reprehensible to Pater Gropp. At this, two red spots appeared on the old man's cheeks and his eyes acquired a feverish lustre. "Never mind," he murmured hastily, when the Young Baron, frightened, withdrew his hand—"never mind, my son."

All this was disquieting to Pater Gropp, but he and men of his stamp are not in the habit of ridding themselves of a care by speaking about it. Much had to accumulate and then by its weight determine the line of action. One cannot carry drops of water from one place to another, but one can do so with a full bucket.

"You shall have your own private room in my house," the Bishop said to his nephew. "There's a splendid chamber, Pater Gropp, opposite my

bedroom, in the corner by the archway, you know; that shall be his."

It was a large, dark, musty room into which the major-domo, David Rotenhan, led the Young Baron after his arrival. There were old chests in it and a carved oaken cabinet reaching to the ceiling. On one wall, between the windows, a wooden crucifix hung; on the other a portrait, almost blackened by smoke, of Bishop Julius Echter of Mespelbrunn, Philipp Adolph's illustrious predecessor. His bed consisted of a sack filled with straw, placed in a wooden frame, with a few blankets on top. The massive table was adorned with a silver candlestick, an enormous inkwell and a Latin breviary bound in parchment. When one stood by the window, one saw a narrow little street with narrow, sad-looking houses, at the closed windows of which sad and suspicious faces occasionally appeared.

The Young Baron was not pleased with his room, nor with the street and its houses. After he had looked at everything, half-curiously, half-

anxiously, he went out into the dark corridor. He walked past doors and pressed down on the latches, but they were locked. He mounted a stairway and found another corridor with other locked doors. It was a little brighter upstairs, however. He noticed dust-covered paintings on the walls, pictures of saints and of the Passion of Christ, carved figures and all sorts of sacred vessels, praying-desks, holy-water fonts, monstrances, faded tapestries. He wandered back and forth and up and down through the old palace until at last he felt more fatigued that when he had walked for hours through the dense forest. When Pater Gropp suddenly stood in front of him by a stairway, as if conjured up out of the floor, he was so frightened that he uttered a low cry, and the same shudder passed over him as a few hours before when he had merely sensed the Jesuit's presence at home in the hall at Ehrenberg. The priest, who was easily six feet tall, looked down upon him silently —silent in an evil way. Ernest looked up to him, his eyes passing up the black garments to the flat,

four-cornered hat. Thus they stood for a while, silently facing each other, and it seemed to Ernest that an eternity had passed when he heard the words: "The Bishop desires to see you. Go to him. But I will tell you this: If you confuse his heart and mind with your sorcerous babbling, then God be merciful to you in your sinful misery."

The Young Baron thought the Jesuit was trying to jest, but a look at his granite-like features showed the boy that there was in this man no more inclination to jest and play than there was air and sunlight in the dark palace of the Bishop. His one thought was, why does he speak to me so threateningly and why does he stand before me like the giant Einheer before the Wends and Huns? How can I have offended him? I must ask my uncle about that. How can I have offended him?—the age-old marvelling question of the guileless before the malevolent. The Bishop would scarcely have been able to answer his question even though he had not lost courage at

the last moment, for Pater Gropp followed him unnoticed and prevented his asking the question.

For the first time he experienced the fear of man, the most invincible of all fears and the most incurable; it was like a claw reaching into his soul. Now there was something to be avoided, someone who stood silently in his twilight chamber when he went to sleep and when he awoke, in whose eyes a world was reflected before which one had to close one's own eyes, otherwise everything became more dismal and confused than one had ever known.

The Bishop had no inkling of this; for the present he had no time to search for hidden things in the boy's soul, as he was completely occupied with what was on the surface. People observed a great change in his demeanour which was most clearly evident in the presence of the Young Baron. Even after a short time it was certain that he could no longer dispense with his nephew's company. Immediately after the early Mass he

wanted to see him, had him awakened, and then could not await his coming.

"Sit down here beside me," he said. "Have you already had your groats? Sit down here on this chair so that we can talk to each other. Tell me everything that comes to your mind; I like to hear that; you need not pay any attention to choosing your words."

If the boy then did according to his wish, he bent his head down to him; he not merely hearkened with his ears, but also with his eyes and hands. If someone interrupted him, his secretary, the provost of the town, a monk, a canon or a servant, he started up, stared grimly at the intruder and motioned to him to depart again.

The Young Baron had to share all his meals with him. Ten times in succession he asked him whether he didn't like this or that, what he liked best to eat, whether he should have a fowl prepared for him, or venison, or a cake with whipped cream. Such a thing had never happened; nobody had

believed it possible. But he went even farther in overcoming his hardened avarice. He summoned the most prominent tailor in the city and ordered a gala-suit for the Young Baron, of purple velvet trimmed with sable, and a costly cloak in addition. While the tailor took the measurements, the Bishop stood by watching him. In his gruff manner he admonished him to do careful work and not to be too sparing with material and lining. When the new suit arrived a few days later and the Young Baron made an unusually presentable appearance in it, the Bishop walked around him in a circle a few times, constantly emitting delighted clicks with his tongue, like a Jew who has concluded a good bargain.

"You shall have a golden necklace, too," he whispered in his ear. "If you'll be a good boy and obey me in everything, I'll present you with a beautiful golden necklace."

Ernest smilingly kissed his uncle's bony, hairy hand and concealed his thoughts, whatever they may have been. He never uttered a remark about

himself; he never said how he felt. He never showed any trace of sadness or of care; the radiant dreaminess of his nature enveloped his entire personality like a glittering garment which it was impossible to penetrate with a view to understanding his inner life.

While the tailor was still fidgeting around on his suit, taking out a fold on his breast, tightening a band on his knee, the Young Baron suddenly laughed aloud, because this skinny person, who was so intimidated by the Bishop, struck him as very funny. He began to tell the story of a tailor's apprentice who had boasted that he dared to walk through the churchyard at midnight; and he actually did so. It was an icy-cold December night; the ghosts surrounded him and with terrible threats forced him to measure the rattling bones of each one for a garment. They would place the material in his workshop; when he reached home all the cloth would be there, and he had to vow to bring the twenty-four garments—that was the number of the ghosts—to the churchyard on New

Year's Eve. "For heaven's sake," the apprentice wailed, "how can I make twenty-four suits in so short a time? There are only nine days left. Do be merciful, skeletons." But all his pleading was of no avail; the ghosts insisted on their demands. When the tailor returned home, he imagined he saw great bales of cloth in his workshop, and he set to work without delay with his yard-stick, needle and scissors. But no one could see the material except himself alone, and when he squatted on his chair and made the motions of cutting, measuring and sewing, all who saw him were horrified, thinking he had gone mad. This, however, did not disturb him, and he sewed and tailored day and night, but in spite of all his efforts he could finish only twenty-three garments. On New Year's Eve he piled them on top of each other and loaded them on his back. It was nothing, was nothing but air; nevertheless, groaning under the burden, he dragged himself to the graves. On the stroke of twelve, as is proper, the skeletons made their appearance. The tailor, sly by his fear,

unpacked the imaginary garments very leisurely, demanded that each ghost try on his suit separately, examined each one with professional eyes, and found something to smooth, to stitch, to improve in each one (although there was nothing to be seen except the bare bones, and even that is doubtful). He managed to keep busy so long that the clock just struck one when he reached his twenty-fourth customer. Then, of course, they all had to disappear, and the question was not settled, the Young Baron roguishly concluded, whether all of the twenty-four ghosts considered themselves duped, since they still had to dance in their bare bones, or whether the tailor alone was the dupe, since he had expended so much time and effort to furnish unreal phantom-garments for these unreal phantoms.

Not only the master-tailor and the Bishop were his auditors while he narrated the story; quite a number of other persons had joined them; the secretary, Baumgarten, the major-domo, Rotenhan, who came to make a report to his master, a young

Dominican monk from the Himmelpfort monastery, who had been waiting in the ante-room, and two scholars from the school which was located in an extension of the palace; they were to be presented as novices to the Bishop by a deacon. Ernest happened to know one of them, the son of a teacher in Kitzingen; he had often seen him among his followers and he also knew that his name was Peter Mayer. The latter had great difficulty in suppressing a cry of joy when he caught sight of the Young Baron. Attracted by the voice, he had been the first to venture across the threshold; afterwards two others followed him. Finally a canon joined them, but the Bishop was so fascinated by his nephew's demeanour and speech that he forgot to object and turn out the intruders, who were guilty of a grave offence.

But that's just how it was, on this occasion as on every other; the cheerfulness and grace with which the Young Baron related his stories conquered the most unwilling ears. There was no difference between young and old; the functionary

burdened with official duties as well as the simple artisan felt compelled to stop and listen. A surprised and musing smile passed over the gloomiest features and made them handsome. This ghost story, for instance, what did it really amount to? It was only a diverting trifle and related as if the narrator were secretly trying to poke fun at this trifle, attempting to demonstrate how this nothing can grow into something when the arch of fate is extended over it; and yet he made it a symbol of life. Everything was in suspended animation, having neither weight nor tangibility, like flowers in a clear mirror. Everything came from out of the depths of the people's fears and dreams; when it was clothed in words and assumed form and shape, it became an elemental being, resembling the course and the rhythm of the stars, necessary to the soul and remote from the mind. He had invented it in an instant; when he saw the tailor bustling about in his uneasy and important manner the whole story had already become a manifest phenomenon. Without the slightest reflection he

could at once have added ten other stories, which, to be sure, were not yet formulated but merely embryonic. But this required no effort on his part; there was a power within him to which he merely had to surrender himself, a torrent which he could not resist, or a weight of which he had to rid himself if he were not to be smothered by it.

Thus it came about that he soon had his auditors here, too, wherever he made his appearance; in the Bishop's ante-room, under the gateway of the old palace, on the square before the Cathedral, at the Main River bridge, in a little out-of-the-way street, in the nook formed by old houses near a smithy. His uncle, the Bishop, daily imposed more stringent restrictions on his unrestrainable passion to roam at will, but he did so in a cowardly fashion, so that in the beginning the prohibition always emanated from the captain of the guard, who also kept him under surveillance then. Nevertheless, he often escaped unseen, especially in the evening hours. He also arranged with children

and young people to meet him in the courtyard and in the halls of the Bishop's palace.

One of his most frequent excursions, after having made the necessary arrangements with Peter Mayer, was to the scholars in the other wing; to go there it was unnecessary even to leave the building. When the teachers and monitors found out about it, they refused him admittance. But whether they were unwilling to offer any lasting resistance to the Bishop's relative and favourite, or, what seemed more probable, whether they themselves were enchanted by the Young Baron's versatility and radiant good-nature, they closed an eye and pretended ignorance when he stole into the halls after dusk, and gathered twenty, thirty or forty of the scholars about him like a priest who summons them to divine service. A few of the preceptors even mingled with the impatient crowd, merely attempting to remain as inconspicuous as possible. The scholars, haggard youths with hollow, sad, tired eyes, with sallow faces, listless and noiseless in all their actions like

people without hope, had been looking forward to this all day. They were glad to be carried away out of their cold world in which their spiritual and intellectual nourishment was as scanty as their bodily fare. The Young Baron felt a strong desire to stir up these weary souls, to lift up these oppressed, to cast unexpected light into their inner darkness. Then his stories became most animated, and exuberance was often unconsciously joined with profound significance, as in the story of the man whose greatest worry was that time passed by so quickly. He stopped all the clocks; wherever he could lay hands on a clock he made it cease running. He even climbed up to the towers and destroyed the works. But once when he needed a single hour to perform a good deed, it was not at hand, for death stepped into the doorway, and it was for ever too late.

He also tried something with these scholars, already hit upon by the Oriental Scheherazade, of whom, however, he had never heard; he did not finish a story, but stretched it over into the next

evening, sometimes even into the second and third. It gave him great pleasure to stop at the most exciting moment and to keep his hearers in breathless suspense for a day. It was like practising a little deception on the imagination of people and a test of their readiness to believe, but then, of course, he did not disappoint them. The idea had occurred to him under the stress of circumstances. His uncle, the Bishop, had commissioned a monk to keep him under surveillance; at all hours when the Bishop himself was prevented by official duties, the monk, a stupid old man, was to be near the Young Baron. Ernest succeeded in bewitching him too. Since he was unusually curious in addition to being simple-minded, Ernest could obtain his silence only by cutting off the thread of his story at the moment when Brother Felician, who took everything as literal truth, became so excited that the saliva ran out of his open, toothless mouth.

But Brother Felician was not the only one who had this experience. After a few weeks the entire chapter of the Cathedral had become feverishly

excited about the Young Baron. He ensnared all of them—canons, provosts, chaplains, deans, capitulars, lay-priests and monks. All of them succumbed to his mysterious gift. Although they had sufficient self-restraint not to force themselves upon him so impetuously as the young people, who often, merely in the hope of seeing him, occupied the courtyard and Cathedral Square in hordes, nevertheless most of them felt that they were beholding an actual miracle. They thought they were pleasing the Bishop when they praised the Young Baron and loudly proclaimed their astonishment. But this was not the case. The Bishop was affected by an increasing uneasiness which gradually changed his habits, upset his daily routine and interfered with his audiences, exercises, prayers and judicial decisions.

XI

In the Bishop's behaviour attacks of groundless anger alternated with treacherous reserve. He could not sleep any more at night. He shyly avoided Pater Gropp, and when the latter entered the room the Bishop became nervous, like a man who has something to conceal. Once when the Jesuit sat silently at the table, with lowered eyes, the Bishop, mumbling angry words, was looking for his breviary which he had held in his hand only a moment before. Suddenly he burst out with the words: "Yes, it was I who gave him the necklace; you might as well know it." He had, as a matter of fact, fastened the promised golden necklace about his nephew's neck a few hours before. But what constrained him to apprise Pater Gropp of it, and in such a contentious tone of voice? The Jesuit was silent.

Sometimes at night the Bishop walked restlessly

about in his room, at times he stepped out into the dark hall and wandered back and forth. On such occasions it frequently happened that he stopped at the Young Baron's door and listened. An inexplicable smile passed over the furrowed features of the old man when he thought he heard the breathing of the sleeping boy inside. He seemed unable to await the morning; he felt a longing to rouse him from his slumber and have him by his side. One night his impatience gained the upper hand. He gently opened the door. As it was the time of full moon, there was a faint glimmer in the room in spite of the overcast sky. He wanted to look at the boy—merely look at him. He walked noiselessly up to the bed and bent over him the better to be able to see the beautiful face which was so strange in sleep. What was it that stirred and burned within him? There is a certain type of curiosity, on the borderline between good and evil, for which another person's sleep is the mystery of mysteries. He who considers the human body merely as the abode of the demons

may believe that this is the most certain way for him to observe them. When an unfamiliar, pleasant sensation causes a conflict within him, his hope of finding the sinful body deserted by them paves the way to his own justification; he may suffer his heart to beat joyfully.

What a strange thing it was for this septuagenarian to be attracted to a human being, to feel a longing for the miraculous in this human being, to picture to himself how the blood coursed through his veins, how his limbs were fashioned, to feel a desire to touch his luminous skin, to recall the smile that made his youthful lips swell like an almond placed in hot milk! On one side is this person and on the other side the world with all its treasures; this one means more than the whole world; all meaning and desire are concentrated upon him. It's enough to make one weep not to be able to force him inside of oneself, concealed from the eyes of all, and to carry him as a pregnant woman bears her child. What one loves ought to remain unborn; whatever has

been born grows distant. The Bishop often felt as if he had to strangle the beautiful slender boy, merely to be able to take him into his arms, to win him, to have him; a dead person does not move.

The same thing was repeated night after night. It became a passion with the Bishop to watch the boy in his sleep. For hours in advance he trembled as before an act concerning which he was not certain whether it was a vice and dissipation or a humble service. All other people desired to hear the Young Baron speak and relate stories; he alone wished to see him silent and breathing unconsciously. His sole object was to win him, but how was he to go about it?

At the end of a certain week during which the harvest of saved souls, through the burning of witches, had been more plentiful than usual, he sat in his secret chamber, to which no one had access, studying the lists containing the names of the condemned. A special column after the names indicated whether the offenders had gone to the

stake repentantly or in godless obduracy, whether in full consciousness and of their own accord or whether the executioners had to drag them there, whether the devil incarnate had appeared to them once more, either to comfort them or in a rage, or whether he had not dared to do so out of fear before the image of Christ crucified. Another column showed how much money and property the respective persons had left behind, how much land, how many houses, how much silver, linen and clothing, how many head of cattle, how much coined money, and what part of this the chapter of the Cathedral received as its share.

It was the Saturday before Pentecost. There was an unusual commotion in the city; everywhere supplications and processions with the cross were going forward. The increase in the murderous witch-trials, snatching away the best citizens or the most highly respected women and making them the victims of an infamous death, had spread among the inhabitants a feeling of mourning and of abject terror. Just now the clock on the Cathe-

dral tower was striking six, the hour at which the Young Baron was always expected to appear before his uncle, and the echoes of the last stroke could still be heard when he entered the room.

"Sit down here by us, my son," began the Bishop, employing the plural of majesty as was his wont in important conversations; "we want to show you something. There you can see how we have in the last days filled the heavenly stage-coach. This word is not badly chosen; it seems to us that you might call us a heavenly coachman. We see to it that the horses are well fed and pull the wagon without difficulty. For many years we have had no other care except to make children of God and to ruin the devil's harlotry business. We are the devil's deceiver, my son, and we inspire him with a holy terror."

With his tiny, blood-shot eyes he winked at the Young Baron merrily. It was certain that he considered himself the real enemy of, and victor over, the Prince of Darkness; and the consciousness

of his deeds gave him an appearance of greatness, of terribleness.

"Look here," he continued, pointing to the list with the nail of his index finger, "we will read you how many candidates for heaven we have this time sent to St. Peter."

He read in a croaking voice: "The old widow Anckers; the Gutbrodt woman; the fat huckstress; the wife of the overseer from Tungersleber; the wife of Procurator Stier; Barbara Znickel; the wife of Alderman Baunach; another female, a stranger; the overseer of the Brembach estate; David Croten's son, twelve years old; a little girl nine years old, also a stranger; the wife and daughter of the apothecary at the Sign of the Deer. Thirteen of them have we helped to gain eternal blessedness."

Ernest sat quiet for a while with downcast eyes; then he shuddered and said: "I do not think it is good to die in the fire."

The Bishop was surprised, became angry in his blustering manner and argued: "Not good!

That may be; but witchcraft, what do you think of that?"

Thereupon Ernest answered: "I think that perhaps fire does not heal witchcraft."

The Bishop, red with anger, cried: "What! not fire? Well, what then, if not fire?"

The Young Baron replied: "Magic is broken only by magic; the stronger charm breaks the weaker."

The Bishop did not trust his ears; speechless with terror he stared at the boy.

But the latter, calm as though lost in a dream, continued: "Everything is magic, all that I see and do. He who knows this does not please our Lord Saviour any the less for it. He too worked magic and miracles. And the greatest miracle was that He lived and walked on earth. It seems to me, Honoured Uncle, that those whose names are written there on your parchment list were far too lowly people to work magic, either good or evil. I might as well confess it to you frankly, I am sorry for all of them, that they had to burn in great pain,

especially the poor little maidens. That cannot be of any use to the world nor to you either; death is a bitter pill."

The Bishop arose and pattered to the door to see that it was firmly closed and that no eavesdropper could hear the blasphemous words of the Young Baron; then he advanced toward the boy with a gesture of exorcism. It looked as though he were trying to dispel a swarm of flies, and in his longish, goat-like face were mingled fear and threat, antipathy and pleading, cowardly tenderness and judicial sternness.

The Young Baron turned toward him, looked at him with eyes as clear as the evening sky above the Cathedral and said: "Honoured Uncle, if you'll permit, I'd like to tell you the story of the innocent little witch. Listen!"

He placed himself in position, as he always did on these occasions, his hands folded on his knees, his head bent forward, his mouth smiling in a way that looked like mockery but yet was nothing of the sort.

"Once upon a time there lived in a castle, far from here, a small, delicate, charming lady whose only grief was that she might become old and thus lose her beauty. Since this worry permitted her no rest, she finally went to consult a famous magician living in Bohemia. He told her: 'So long as you do not give away your heart, noble lady, you will remain as beautiful as you are now.' From that moment forward the lady was completely changed. She ceased to love her husband, who soon afterward fell in a battle against the Turks, and toward the child she had borne, a daughter by the name of Irene, she became totally indifferent and like a stranger; yes, finally she refused to have anything to do with Irene, departed the country and left her to her fate.

"But Irene was not so lost and betrayed as one might have thought; it was not only that the servants and maids in the castle faithfully watched over her—that was the smallest part of it. She had a mighty protecting spirit, a little fellow in a grey cloak; and though he was but one span in height,

yet he had enormous powers. He was continually about Irene like an invisible bodyguard, protected her from every evil, shielded her from bad dreams, showed her secret paths in the woods where she might wander in peace, taught her the names of the stars, to differentiate the plants, to love the good, to read in the faces of men whom to fear and whom to trust. Such a little Greycoat can do much, since he knows about all the forces of the earth and understands all that grows, down to the roots.

"One day when Irene was almost grown and had become a very sensible girl, Little Greycoat appeared before her and said: 'I can now do nothing more for you; my mission is fulfilled and I have been called elsewhere; but if you are ever in great need just call three times: "Treasure-digger, appear!" Then I'll come and help you.'

"Not long afterward the noble lady again returned to the castle, and she really was still just as beautiful as when she went away, for she had not given away a single drop of her heart's blood—

that had been her chief concern. Yet something had happened to her; no one knew what. Perhaps the very thing that was to have been her salvation had turned out to be her chief affliction. When she saw how beautiful her daughter had become, and that she had evidently grown up under the tutelage of a spirit, a violent ardour began to burn in her breast. To quench this inner flame she knew no other means than to kindle a flame without; therefore she set fire to the castle. As the conflagration began to blaze brightly, she called together all her people, accused Irene of having caused the disaster and denounced her before all the people as an incendiary and a witch.

"Irene was dragged before a court, and, after she had been tortured, confessed what they asked —just as they all confess; you must know how it is, Honoured Uncle. She was condemned to death and had to mount the pyre; but at the moment when the destroying fire approached her she called out: 'Treasure-digger, appear!' as Little Greycoat had taught her. The dwarf did not appear,

as she had expected, but something quite different happened. The noble lady, with uplifted arms, rushed out before the mob and the hangmen and cast herself down before her daughter, confessing what she had done, while out of her face there shone—as though a divine fire had seared it—nothing but love, repentant, living love.

"When the duke of that country heard of the event he pardoned the noble lady and invited mother and daughter to come to his court. But that divine fire had also done something else; it had turned white the hair of the noble lady and had lined her face with the wrinkles usual in a woman of her years. That, however, did not cause her the least grief."

It had become dark in the Bishop's chamber, yet not so dark that the Young Baron's glistening eyes were no longer visible. He sat there quietly and waited. In this tale of premonition, of wish and image—of mysteriously certain premonition, as later events were to show—there was as much reality as had unconsciously been woven into it

by his own experience, and unconsciously it echoed out of it. It was as though the story had been told not by his lips, but by his very soul in hidden fear and longing. The Bishop sensed something of this, although but indistinctly and against his will; on the whole he felt that he had been denied and mocked, and he sadly recognized how little power he had over this boy. Suddenly he sprang up, ran through the room like an insane person and shouted: "I'll cast you into the Main River like Cæsar's goat!"

Angry tears were running out of his eyes and he dried them with his sleeve. The Young Baron left the old man, who continued to rage for a long time until he finally had to open a window to get a breath of air; he became calm only when he heard floating up from the streets the monotonous chants of the processions. But in his breast the storm continued, and late in the night he once more started out to walk to his nephew's bedroom. He had left the door ajar; in the hall there was burning under an image of the Mother of God

a candle whose light reached the bed and dimly illumined the Young Baron's features. The Bishop stooped down and looked at the sleeper; while he was bending down so eagerly his silken skull-cap fell from his head directly into the Young Baron's face. The boy woke up, without terror, and calmly looked at his uncle.

Hurriedly the Bishop returned the cap to his head, seized the boy by the shoulders with both hands and said in a guttural voice: "You are to make me a confession this very night; you must confess whether or not you communicate with the evil spirits of whom you are for ever telling. You must have seen it with your own eyes, since you can picture it all with such suspicious exactitude. Have you seen him—the Little Greycoat? Perhaps others too? Behemoth, Leviathan or Asmodeus? And perhaps you have seen were-wolves? Did he really appear to you, the little fellow in the grey cloak? What does he look like? Has he a beard? Has he ten fingers on his hands like one of us, and is there no mark to be seen on

him? And why did he call himself a treasure-digger? Does he know where hidden treasures are? Did he tell you where a treasure is lying? Speak, my dearest son; trust me with everything! I fear—I fear you are in league with the demons, and your enslaved soul yearns for freedom."

The Young Baron did not answer; in surprise he looked at the hideous old man. The passionately distorted face filled him with fear, but he did not show it; the bony fingers bored deeply into his flesh and pained him sharply, but he did not move.

More insistently, more fawningly, the Bishop continued: "I will protect you against Pater Gropp and against the hangman if you will confess all. I'll hide you from them. I'll put you into the garden-house in the castle at Veitshöchheim; I'll give you a cook and you shall have fine things to tickle your palate; and every day I'll visit you and you can tell me stories to your heart's desire. That I'll do for you, dearest son of my heart, but you must confess, that I may know how it is within you."

The Young Baron, more and more amazed

and shocked, answered in a calm voice: "Let me sleep, Honoured Uncle. It is late and I don't know what to confess to you."

The Bishop rose up and shouted, half in anger and half in distress: "Then, forsooth, I wish that my eyes had never beheld you, you young evil-doer."

So saying he ran to the door and with a loud crash slammed it behind him. As he was about to proceed he saw that someone was barring his way. It was Pater Gropp.

XII

THE Jesuit followed the Bishop into his room; there he remained standing near the wall, looking down at the floor, haggard and silent. His arms hung down black against his black clothes, and out of his sleeves his hands protruded like two big, pale, fleshy fruits. He was silent, because he was waiting for the Bishop to speak, although he knew better what went on in the churchman's breast than did the latter himself. For he had been trained to guess people's secrets and to guide them according to his knowledge; thereby he had acquired the assurance that makes the hesitating willing to yield, and the coldness that frightens the lukewarm. It was only his naturally keen mind that counterbalanced his gloomy outlook upon life; the black world in which he lived knew no law except that of blind obedience; and life, birth and death meant

to him little in comparison with the rules and their observance.

But no one can escape his own human nature; no one, without at least secretly being himself, can become the creature of invisible keepers and commanders who enclose him in a ready-made world where he must serve and be silent. It is not thus; the circle through which the outward course of a man's life can run remains as large as the space in his soul—otherwise there could not have been a man like Pater Spe. Like the Bishop's chancellor, he too was a Jesuit father, but as different from him as celestial substance is from terrestrial. He went about bringing consolation and healing sorrow (as well as he was able); in his capacity as confessor to the witches he wandered through the cities of the Franconian bishoprics; and, of course, as such he was a thorn in the flesh of all judges of heretics, and for Pater Gropp he was for various reasons a thorn in his heart.

The first thing Pater Gropp demanded of the Bishop was that he should give up the Young

Baron. The Bishop became angry, yet his wriggling and scolding concealed but ill the fear he felt of the Jesuit, who on his part was as unexcited as though he were reading off the titles in an index. Even in this first conversation the word witchcraft was mentioned. That the Young Baron was guilty of a *delictum* punishable with death could not be doubted. It was no longer a matter of mere suspicion; there were facts and proofs, assuming that the pestilence infecting everybody in the castle and the young folk in the city and its vicinity came from this source. It was quite evident that the commonwealth was in danger of dissolution through the evils that were becoming more and more common, such as the slackening of the moral fibre, the looseness of the talk, the deluded enthusiasm into which the Young Baron led the people, the spirit of buffoonery, the loss of public decency and of respect for superiors, the concatenation of the people's thoughts with the absurd imaginings which since the boy's arrival had even found their way into the minds of other-

wise honourable folk. Such things had happened before. It was just a hundred years since the Bohaim revolt had seized the people of the district of the Tauber and the country of the Main.

Since the Bishop had never heard of them Pater Gropp did not withhold his instruction. A visionary youth, Hans Bohaim, a peasant's son from Helmstadt in the Tauber Valley, went about with drum and bagpipe to visit fairs and dances and confused the peasants with prophecies and preachments; the rich were to give up their wealth in order that the poor might have enough to eat; forests, water and air, game, fish and birds should be free for all who wanted to make use of them; the rule of the Church as well as of the State was to come to an end; no one was to own more than his neighbour, and princes and lords were to work for wages just like the farm-labourers. The villagers came to him with gifts; they offered wax candles to him in the church of Nicklashausen, where he had his head-quarters; crowds of pilgrims streamed there, and as soon as the fool appeared

the mob fell down before him and asked for his blessing.

"Holy Youth, pray for us!" they shouted. They called him simply "The Youth!"—that jackanapes! The women cut off their braids, tore off their kerchiefs and pointed shoes; the men sacrificed their counters and card games in a big fire. He needed only to address them and they were enchanted, for he was invested with the appearance of innocence and beauty, like many of his kind. And if Bishop Rudolf von Scherenberg, who was reigning at the time and who was a very weak ruler, had not been urged to interfere by the Archbishop Diether von Isenburg, the rebel hordes would have stormed the walls of Würzburg, plundered the city and even slain him. But as it was, they seized the youthful wizard in time; yet even at the stake he continued in his diabolical work, inasmuch as he sang hymns to the praise of the Virgin until the smoke stifled his voice.

"Now you have this very same disaster before

you," ended Pater Gropp; "also over the Young Baron of Ehrenberg the Evil One has spread his enticing cloak, has equipped him with charms and a pleasing manner, roguishness and flattering speech. Act therefore as your conscience and the salvation of your soul dictate."

The Bishop pleaded: "Give me time! I want to think about it. Let me sleep on it! Whatever is right shall be done."

The Jesuit had no objection to granting him time to think it over; he could proceed to arrest and inquisition only after he had obtained the Bishop's consent, but he was sure of getting it, and he did not mind waiting. The Bishop knelt in prayer for hours and denied himself food; it seemed to him that the air was thick with the breath of demons. He forbade the Young Baron to come to him; rather he forbade it to himself, for he felt regret and desire. He appeared more restless than ever, and was caught eavesdropping by his own servants.

"Perhaps it would be sufficient if we tried

exorcism?" he proposed to the Jesuit in the evening.

"Are you bargaining with me for his soul, Your Eminence?" he asked, with tightly compressed lips.

"And what if I did?" cried the Bishop in frightened anger.

"It would be a bad bargain," returned the Jesuit dryly; "in the end you would pay for it yourself, to your great cost."

The Bishop tried once more to gain time.

"Let him come and examine him yourself," he murmured.

Pater Gropp shook his head with contemptuous melancholy.

"What are you hoping for?" he demanded bitterly. "That this will-o'-the-wisp should lure me into the bushes? You know, Your Eminence, that Satan in a human body does not budge if one deals with him gently, but only when one questions harshly."

The Bishop began to tremble, and that was

exactly what, in this one case, he was struggling not to do. To think it all out was horror, but where the horror became most intense, there lay an appeal of lust. Pater Gropp, reading the curved wrinkle on the old man's forehead, saw that his cause was being furthered.

"You could press him more closely to your heart, if in his torture he recognized you as his true benefactor," he said sombrely, following an inspiration that shed light on his own inner life more clearly than his usual cautious words. "Have you not often found that the screams of the tortured devils make the blood in our veins sing hymns like a chorus of angels? There is something purifying in being a witness to the torture of the wicked, and we love him twice as much who in his misery makes us recognize that we had been misled and that now we may turn with love to his purified body."

The Bishop became pale, if the turning grey of his flabby cheeks might be so termed. It seemed to him as though he were standing in a circle of

tunnels and, looking through the narrow opening, could see pictures in each that on many hundred occasions had transported his spirit into shuddering delights, not only because they offered him the assurance that he was gaining merit for the greater glory of the Faith and was striking the Arch-Fiend in a vulnerable spot; not only because the trembling bodies, the death groans, the lacerated flesh, the blood shooting up in streams, the stifled stammering and the marrow-piercing shrieks assured him unambiguously that he himself was being spared just as many demoniac temptations and threats as there were poor sinners, male and female, whining under the fists of the hangmen; there was also something more connected with it—an inscrutable, dark feeling of pleasure that expanded and contracted his breast as though it were the interior of an organ resounding with melodies. Perhaps there were myriad chambers into which he was looking through the funnel-holes; perhaps it was only a single one peopled by numberless victims, but his insatiable eye always fell on Pater Gropp

walking like a grey shadow through the purple mist to test what amount of pain a man can bear, in order that in bloody nakedness he may forget his kind and fall into the open hand of God like a storm-blown grain of sand into a protecting vessel.

The Bishop hesitated and still hesitated. His wavering was fever; he conceived the plan of having the Young Baron abducted, and spoke about it to Brother Felician; but an hour later Gropp knew it and was taking preventive measures. The following night he insisted more definitely on a decision.

"Do not cling to a deception," he warned. "Joannes de Rubescina says: 'The Demon knows whom to teach the tickling of the palate, whom the impulse to lust, whom to confuse through joy, whose spirit to darken through grief, whom to mislead through a dream.' Have you not read that to Saint Parthenius, who was a bishop like you, Bishop of Lampsacus, there was brought a man of unclean spirit, that the man greeted the Saint

and that the latter did not return the greeting because he recognized the Demon with one glance of his inner eye? 'Why don't you accord me the honour of a greeting?' asks the man. 'I have seen you and recognized you, why not you me?' The Saint answers: 'If you have really seen and recognized me, then leave this creature of God.' The Demon called out in terror: 'Do you really want to drive me out of my habitation? I beg of you, give me at least a little more time.' 'Has it not already been far too long that you dwell here?' asks the Saint. 'Since my earliest youth,' replies the Demon; 'no one has ever recognized me except you at this moment.' Thus it is written, Your Eminence. Although I cannot in any way compare myself with that Saint, I too have seen and recognized."

The Bishop opened his eyes wide in terror.

"How is that? At what moment? Let me hear, Gropp!" he murmured in fright.

Pater Gropp stepped up close to the Bishop and said, lowering his rasping voice: "Ever since

I first saw the Young Baron my spirit has been paralysed by his hellish phantasmagoria. Have you ever suspected, Your Eminence, that in reality he does not exist?"

"What! not exist? For God's and Christ's sake, how do you mean that, Gropp?" stammered the Bishop, making the sign of the cross.

"It is only a mirrored image of him that we see," replied Pater Gropp; "just as his character is phantasmagorical, so is his body. Force him to appear and you will be freed of the magic that exudes from him. There you have the riddle; there is its interpretation."

The Bishop arose, his legs scarcely supporting him.

"Then it is only a demoniac spectre that flashes before my senses the semblance of corporeality?" he breathed.

Pater Gropp nodded silently.

"And you think that before all else we must bring up his true ego out of the horrible chasm?"

Pater Gropp nodded.

"Then he is inside the mirror?" continued the Bishop, slipping his arms into the sleeves of his cassock and walking up and down in despair. "In there he talks, tells stories, laughs, conjures, and nothing of him is in space, not one hair of his body?"

Pater Gropp nodded.

"I have experienced it myself," he said, slowly raising his lids, behind which glistened the liquid blackness of his eyes; "inasmuch as he forced me to accept his unreal existence as his real one, I was in danger of losing my own. I went out once, I went out twice; I went out to Ehrenberg and watched and followed him unnoticed. It seemed as though all truth, of which to some extent I have come to partake, had been changed into a lie and a caricature. He is Satan and Satanism rolled into one."

When he called the Young Baron Satan it was spoken out of a depth of his heart unknown even to Pater Gropp himself. Had he approved of him and accepted him, then he would have destroyed

himself and thrust himself down from the highway on which he was wandering with iron assurance; had he attempted merely to understand him, he would have become another—no longer the hater of life that freely blossomed out of itself, the persecutor of this freely playing, airily floating creature. It was just this creature that he opposed, as the tamer, in order to cast it into chains, that it might please *his* spirit, and be subject to the very master whose chains he himself was wearing. Thou shalt not soar, while I go in chains; thou shalt not laugh, while I am chilled by the rottenness of the world; thou shalt not play and amuse thy fellows, while my avenging hand grasps at the heart of humanity that I may make mankind obedient to myself; I dare neither know, see nor feel you, for you are the sinful element that is discarded and you must disappear before me if I am to continue on earth. In this way he might have spoken to a tree, to a beautiful animal, to a singing voice, provided only that it had been growing before his eyes as tangibly as this human being, or if his thinking

had had the same cruel consistency as his actions. But there is a point at which the boldest destroyer is forged to the law of the stars and times; there he must stop, there his power breaks down; he knows that and therefore he is so glum and silent.

The Bishop, in his distress, decided to make one last effort—an effort, to be sure, that showed his simplicity and his superstitious delusion, but which Pater Gropp quietly permitted, satisfied to play the rôle of the spectator who knows that his hour is coming. Very early in the morning one of the upper rooms of the palace was hung half-way up the walls with black cloth. On a table draped in black stood a five-armed candelabrum, and when the five candles were lighted the Bishop gave the command to call the Young Baron.

They had to wake him out of his sleep, and before he had washed and dressed a good quarter of an hour elapsed. The Bishop had meanwhile gone out, and Pater Gropp stood motionless before the black wall, his glance lowered to the ground. When he heard bright boyish laughter

from the door he looked up angrily. The Bishop and the Young Baron had collided on the threshold; the Bishop, coming out of a certain cabinet down the hall and walking along in his absent-minded, short-sighted manner, had not noticed the boy and had almost bowled him over. The Young Baron had seen whence his uncle came, and as he began to laugh so violently, the Bishop demanded morosely why he was laughing. The boy replied that he had had to think of a funny story. "What sort of a story? A story again; nothing but stories! Well, what sort of a story?" urged the Bishop when he saw that Ernest hesitated somewhat.

"In a certain city," began the Young Baron, with humorously twitching lips, "there lived a rich burgher who was carrying on business with the Emperor, and as he never was quite sure whether or not he could talk about it to his wife, he decided to make a test as to how well she could keep a secret. For this reason he confided in her one day that, while he had been in a certain place,

a raven had flown out of his body. The wife was both astonished and frightened, thought over the matter back and forth, and in the end must needs report the secret to her neighbour's wife. But by that time the one raven had become two. The neighbour's wife told it to another neighbour, on which occasion there were three ravens, and so they kept on increasing until at length the story came back to the burgher that forty ravens had flown forth from his body. Now in order to prevent there being many more of these birds of ill-omen, he called together his fellow-citizens and explained to them the evil rumour. But to his wife, whom he had thus recognized as very talkative, he confided nothing of his business affairs."

He again broke out into gay laughter; the Bishop against his will contracted his face in a convulsive smile, but glanced timidly in the direction where Pater Gropp was like one fallen asleep while standing up.

"Be careful, my beloved little son," whispered the Bishop to the boy, and laid his arms about

his neck; "we shall now try an experiment with you, and you must do your best, must gather all your strength, that the result may be favourable for you."

Only now the Young Baron seemed to notice the black curtains and burning candles. His face paled and he asked: "What it it, Uncle?"

With his leathery jowl the Bishop came close to the Young Baron's tender cheek. His unshaven beard tickling the boy, Ernest turned his head to one side.

"Don't be afraid, little son!" said the Bishop in a cajoling tone, while his old voice trembled with infinite tenderness—"don't be afraid; just do all I tell you."

Then Pater Gropp's voice resounded: "I think that there has been enough of that, Your Eminence."

At the same moment there came out of the corner from behind a praying-desk the murmuring of a Latin prayer. Brother Felician was kneeling there; Ernest saw nothing of him except his long square ears under his scapulary. The Bishop

stepped into the middle of the room, his features distorted into a frightful viciousness and severity, and shrieked: "Show yourself, Satan! Show yourself now in your true form!"

Filled with uneasy astonishment, the Young Baron gazed at him.

"Is it I, Uncle, to whom you are speaking?" he asked timidly.

"Show yourself in your true form, or be accursed!" shouted the Bishop in a shrill treble.

"Why, I am here," whispered the Young Baron.

"It's not you, it's your demon," was the angry reply; "thrust him from you that you may be yourself."

The Young Baron was irritated, and with awakening pride answered: "I cannot understand, Uncle, what you are saying."

The Bishop threw out his arms and exclaimed: "Then I exorcise you for the last time; in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, appear in your true form!"

The Young Baron looked up with a premonition

of evil. He saw the motionless figure of Pater Gropp standing with averted face, and then he clasped both hands before his eyes.

"God have mercy upon me!" he whispered and sank on his knees; and again: "God have mercy upon me!" Turning his glance toward the horribly distorted face of the Bishop, he cried: "I cannot become otherwise, Uncle; I want to remain as I am, and if I were not as I am, then I should like to become as I am."

Now Pater Gropp raised his head in triumph.

The Bishop said in a dying voice: "Then let the law take its course, Pater Gropp."

Two soldiers of the palace guard stepped up and seized the Young Baron.

XIII

The first news of the Young Baron's imprisonment reached Ehrenberg through a courier *en route* to the northern Spessart, who told Wallork, who, however, kept the news to himself on account of his morose, uncommunicative manner and his incipient feeble-mindedness. But further messages, carried by hunters and vagabonds, were not long in following. The news was imparted to deaf old Lenette by the town clerk of Randersacker, who came to the castle to collect the cattle tax.

"Arrested for witchcraft by the Bishop's order and thrown into the jail at the Mint!"

This did not sound like a rumour or an exaggeration; for whom did the Bishop spare in his fear and his superstition? Lenette stood a while as though paralysed. Then she said stubbornly: "I don't believe it!" Noontime came, but in the hearth no fire had yet been started.

The news had also promptly penetrated to the tutor. It was no surprise to him when he called to mind the words and the bearing of the Jesuit. On the very day he indicted an epistle to his friend, Provost Lieblein in Würzburg, asking his aid in the matter. He sent the letter to the city by a shepherd-boy and received an answer the same evening.

"I cannot help you, *amicus* ; I cannot even advise you," wrote the Provost. "In our world everything is turning upside down, so to speak; unreason upside and reason down. The end will soon be at hand; what good can an old man do under such circumstances? Do not budge from the spot—that is the best advice I am able to give you. However, if you care to set out and wish to come over into my humble domicile, I shall arrange for you to meet Pater Spe, a knowing and pious man, such as are few in the Holy Roman Empire. Perhaps he can be of use to you; he is going to sup with me on the Sunday of Peter and Paul."

The admonition not to budge from the spot did not fall on unfruitful soil with Master Onno —that was exactly what he wanted, to remain unmolested and undisturbed among his folios and manuscripts. After the Young Baron's departure no one had bothered about him, and although he now no longer held any office there, he could not make up his mind to leave Ehrenberg. And where could he have gone? He did not know any place in the wide world that offered him a haven of refuge. But since it was a matter of the Young Baron's welfare, he overcame his inertia and his timidity, and the evening before his trip to Würzburg he confided to Lenette the nature of his excursion, adding that he did not place much hope in the venture.

The grey-haired spinster was sitting wretchedly before the hearth, but her wrinkled face lighted up a bit; although she did not think very highly of the tutor personally, yet she had an instinctive, almost superstitious respect for his learning. One could never tell; perhaps he could rescue her

Young Baron. Everything was different since Baron Ernest had left; the steps were twice as hard to climb, the wood was twice as hard to split; every night was like a grave; the forest seemed to be growing together over the roof of the castle. Without him she felt herself a miserable piece of humanity, and even though he had not glanced in her direction for days at a time, he had been there at least, coming and going, and it was to cook his soup that she lighted the fire; she washed the linen for his bed; she darned the shirt for his body, almost like a mother.

And his mother—what was she doing meanwhile? She did not even know how matters stood in regard to her son and what dire things threatened him. No one had told her anything. On hearing the news, no one but Lenette had given the least thought to her; no one mentioned the fact that she was his mother, that it really concerned her most. No one came near her, and she on her part desired to see no one. Yesterday Lenette had made up her mind to tell her everything, but scarcely

had she mentioned the Young Baron's name when the Baroness made a violent gesture commanding her to be silent. Lenette had stopped speaking. But then she remembered how she had loved the lady, and how she had served her throughout her life, and how the Baroness had dwindled away to a pitiful shadow—husbandless, sonless, godless. What would be the outcome of it all?

She had gone away, but on this evening, when the tutor spoke to her, she had come back. Candles were flickering in the room; the Baroness was not yet asleep; she held a metal figurine in her hands, a Diana with her bow, and she was fondling it, staring absent-mindedly into the void.

"What are you doing there, Your Grace?" said Lenette. "You'd do better to look after your child, instead of frittering away your time with that heathenish truck."

The Baroness, with a vacant stare, murmured: "Why did he go away from me?"

Lenette thought she had misunderstood and, placing her right hand like a sea-shell to her ear,

bowed down toward the bed of her mistress. But Theodata slowly shook her head, while tears glistened between her gracefully curved lashes.

Lenette stammered: "Are you sorry for him, Your Grace? Really, is your heart melting and do you think of him as a true mother should?"

With a weak gesture the Baroness brushed aside the eager questions.

"You can understand me only after your manner," she muttered bitterly. "Who is there to understand me after mine? If I were a mother, I'd also be a woman, and I'd have a heart, and I should not have wasted my life, but have raised my boy and should now possess him surely. An evil conscience makes one evil."

Then Lenette, who had drunk in every syllable as a person dying of thirst drinks up water, gathered all her courage together and said: "The hangman of Würzburg has seized him and he is languishing in prison, Your Grace."

Theodata leaped up as though her bed had caught fire.

"The Bishop?" she asked with her mouth, eyes, hands.

Lenette nodded.

"What is he accused of?"

"He accuses him of witchcraft."

"And they will put him to the torture?"

"That is to be feared, Your Grace."

"You lie, Lenette—you lie, damn you! That cannot be! That shall not be! Why are you standing there? Why are we standing here? What are we waiting for? To Würzburg, quick, quick! My cloak, my shoes! To Würzburg, to the Bishop! Don't gape at me! Quick, quick!"

While saying this she ran about barefooted and in her nightdress and seized thoughtlessly this or that object, only to throw it down immediately. Lenette, pleasantly shocked by this rage for which she had not been prepared, considered it necessary, nevertheless, to oppose the ardour of her horrified and fearful mistress and to urge patience until morning, because it was impossible to start out on the road at night-time, too far for

the delicate feet of the Baroness, too great the danger on the public highway. But if Wallork were to start immediately for Rimpar to get a carriage, then they could set out at dawn and they would lose no time. It required much pleading and adjuring to induce the Baroness to wait. She ran up and down constantly, with clasped hands and hoarse mutterings, as if she wanted to chase away the time.

Since the Young Baron had taken leave of her, the longing in her soul had grown into a storm. As he had stood before her and waited (waited for what?—she knew it as little as he himself), every detail of that disastrous night had came back: she saw the father's thick, red neck and the child's little arms laced about it; she heard in her breast the never-forgotten shriek: that is the way you will turn out; man takes after man! Now she watched his features, seeking in terror for the horrible trait that had once cast her down into bottomless misery; she did not trust to appearance; she did not dare to see the

reality. Then when the boy had left her, she believed that she had forgotten him; she walked from window to window, looked down the well, glanced up to the sky, and forgot, forgot. She hummed a frivolous little song and forgot, forgot.

But there was something in her that did not want to forget, could not forget. He is different, that something in her kept saying; just look at him. Hasn't Nature created him as a very contrast, as though he were to blot out the image of his father? And again she forgot, and she allowed herself to be made hopeless and tired by the many "nows" that followed in insidious succession. Forgetting was always combined with freezing; she tapped the bronze bell with her hammer, and when Lenette came she complained, "I'm freezing." Outside it was so hot that the cats were avoiding the sunshine and the birds were becoming sleepy, and Lenette murmured: "I don't believe that you are freezing, Your Grace." Then she tossed an armful of straw into the hearth and started a fire.

Thus the longing for the departed came gnawing

and plaguing her worse with every passing hour; she could no longer forget his figure, his smile, his voice, his posture — everything about him appeared ineffably wistful and lovely. His father faded into a shadow; only the son was there, *her* son. And she whimpered to herself: "Ah, perhaps he has never existed, perhaps I have only dreamed him, perhaps he was my first and only dream, and because he lives only in my imagination, he knows nothing of me, has never seen me, doesn't know my face. Ah, Heaven! what shall I do? How can I manage to make him believe that I exist!"

With such distraught exclamations, sounding like a ghostly echo of the scholastic conclusions of Pater Gropp, she seized the silver figurine and, whispering passionately, "Counsel me, lovely Diana," she hurried with a burning candle in her hand through the halls of the old house, finally even up into the attic, to look through an attic window to the south where she knew the city of Würzburg lay. Endlessly the darkness seemed to

spread between the wooden pillars; the frequently crossing and interlacing beams seemed like the roots of an immense tree growing up to the stars; about her lay heaps of unspun wool, chips, rubbish and rags, all sorts of odds and ends dating from past generations; outside was the darkness of the summer night, into which she dipped her glances as into a cool bath. As she heard the frogs croaking and the owlets calling, and saw the tips of the pine-trees at the horizon bending in a gentle wind, she relieved her oppressed heart by singing a song—no more that frivolous song, but quite another. She did not know where she had heard it first.

I spend my nights in sorrow;
I eat and drink my tears;
With tears I greet the morrow,
For love my bosom sears.
Oh, when shall I see shining
That bright and glistening day
When after love's repining
I may have rest alway?

Lenette kept her promise; the carriage was at the door at six o'clock. She thought the tutor might profit by the opportunity to ride with them, but he had started out an hour and a half before them. Wrapped in a faded cape—for it had begun to rain—she joined her mistress in the carriage. About nine o'clock they arrived in Würzburg. In the Main Valley the weather had cleared, and as the clumsy coach rattled through the city gate, the streets lay there in golden sunshine. Everywhere people were standing in groups; silent crowds pressed around the churches ; excitement filled all hearts. The militiamen looked about them grimly, and except for the closed shutters of the shops there was no evidence of the holiday. Small wonder, for the rage of the Bishop in the last days had surpassed all bounds; there was not a burgher's family safe against informers, no master-workman could carry on his craft in peace, the bride was dragged away from the wedding-feast, the infant was snatched from the mother's breast and the mother torn before the witch

tribunal that spelled her doom. For without at least a lifelong illness incurred on the rack, none ever escaped. Natives, strangers, matrons, virgins, noble ladies, wretched jades, were sacrificed on daily pyres. Already there was felt a lack of hands to carry out the work of murder and of paper for writing. For where they murder officially they must also write; such is the case at all times and in all centuries; if the scribe does not write the hangman cannot kill.

In spite of the blue sky over the roofs, rising one above another, there was something livid over the city and an uncanny glimmering in the eyes of the people; they were strolling too near death; the breath of ghosts arose about them; in the air there was a fluttering as of unseen wings—the souls of the murdered ones who did not wish to separate from wife, child, parents, brothers or sisters. In a world where the walls between time and eternity are so thin that they seem to be breaking between to-day and to-morrow, the spirits of men are driven across the boundaries.

From despair to dissipation is but one step; thus all the taverns were crowded and the howls of drunken men drowned out the church bells. In the narrow streets of the lower Main quarter, where the boatmen and the raftsmen lived, laughing couples danced along the shore. The show-booths behind the Julius Hospital were attracting early crowds, especially the Punch-and-Judy show and the shooting-gallery. In addition to these two currents of hopelessness or defiant gaiety, there was still another to be felt. It was lost in the crowd, to be sure, yet it became noticeable here and there on a bridge, before a garden, in the shadow of a wall, mysteriously visible like ever-recurring rapids, and more apparent every hour.

It seemed as though certain messages were being carried about, as though from one point an order had been issued and that it was being repeated in different directions. At times many burghers remained standing in the street, astonished; there seemed to be two, three, five times as many children in the city as usual. They saw unknown

faces, at first only a few, later hundreds of them. Where do they come from? they asked themselves. In spite of the great commotion only young children were to be seen, nine-year-old, ten-year-old, twelve-year-old boys and girls; there were also older ones, thirteen or fourteen years old; but these were more quiet; they moved more cautiously. At noontime a veritable herd of children stood in the square before the Cathedral, silently, as though they were waiting for someone; when the corporal of the guard approached them they scattered like sparrows. In the vicinity of the prison at the Mint there was a continual rushing and running; many must have hidden in the bushes or caves of St. Mary's Hill, for in this direction most of them disappeared, or they bobbed up again at the great bridge over the Main when they approached from above. Already people were talking about the unusual bustle and becoming worried, but when they turned to ask for an explanation from children they knew, or even their own children, they gained no information. There was

a pass-word that on this day of Peter and Paul flew from mouth to mouth among the roving bands of conspirators, a word that said nothing but probably signified everything. It was, "The day of the Visitation of our Lady, before sundown!"

The carriage of the Baroness drove up to the portal of the Bishop's palace. The Baroness descended; the guard allowed her to pass when she mentioned her name, and Lenette stuck close to her heels. On the stairs stood a lay-brother, and Theodata asked him to lead her to His Eminence; he replied that the Bishop was at Mass in the Cathedral. She said that she would wait, when a second lay-brother approached to say that she would have to wait a very long time, for afterward there was to be a reception of the canons and abbots and then His Eminence would, on account of the heat, drive to his castle, Veitshöchheim. But the heat was not the cause of this decision, as everyone knew, but rather because His Eminence was tortured by a restlessness that aroused the suspicion of all about him. Since the imprisonment

of the Young Baron he had not eaten anything, he had not slept and had not been able to collect his thoughts for prayer. Voices had come to him from the outside, giving news of the bitterness and the threatening attitude of the citizens, and because of this he was suspicious of every man, every facial expression, every sound. He placed guards before the rooms in which he was staying; he saw the air full of ghastly faces with gnashing teeth, and everywhere he heard uncanny voices.

Theodata could not know of this, but since the bearing of the servants is a mirror of the condition of the master, and because her tortured soul was trembling in painful sensitiveness, she felt the disturbance of the house in every breath. Her anxious impatience only grew more intense because of this, and she stuck to her resolve to see the Bishop. She remained standing on the stair-landing, behind her the silent Lenette, with wide-open, terrified eyes.

High Church dignitaries in festive garb walked past her; some looked at her in surprise, others

darkly and, as it were, rebukingly, some in friendly and questioning manner; some faces betrayed sorrow and gloominess, others hardness and pride. She would have liked to raise her arms and cast herself before these men, but something held her in a spell stronger than her feeling of helplessness: her deep experience of the heartlessness of the world, which she bore within herself without really being aware of it.

Finally the Bishop appeared in the midst of his stately entourage; slowly he ascended the stairs, but scarcely had he seen the Baroness, who advanced two steps toward him, when he bounded back and called to his companions in a shrill falsetto: "Take her away! Take that woman out of my sight!"

Thereupon followed a pause, frightened murmurs, astonishment, disapproval, humming of voices. Canon Franz von Hatzfeld approached the Baroness to lead her away; she resisted; he urged her earnestly, but she shouted down the stairs into the Bishop's face: "Give me back my boy,

Bishop and brother-in-law, otherwise I'll proclaim before all the people that you and you alone in this country are in league with the devil."

These words caused the Bishop to congeal with terror. Such an accusation he had never expected to hear; the mere thought of it lay as distant from him, who had devoted his life to the extirpation of the devil, as a denial of God or doubt in the dogmas of the Church. His terror, to which was associated immediately the fear that he might be called upon to give an account of himself, was so great that he reeled and for support clutched the shoulders of Pater Gropp, who was standing beside him. Since he was well aware that even the shadow of a suspicion was sufficient, and had been sufficient a thousand times, to hurl men into destruction, because the symptoms were always sworn to by the witnesses only, but denied desperately up to the last moment by the victim himself, the recognition of the fact that he himself was not outside the terrible circle struck him with such force that the very ground seemed to crumble

beneath him. It might be possible; the tempter might have approached him and outwitted him—even him; everything about him whirled in a circle; he gave vent to a discordant howl and pressed his quivering lips to the Jesuit's arm.

Amidst the indescribable confusion that laid hold of all present, only deaf old Lenette retained her composure. She recognized the danger threatening her mistress; she seized her wrist and drew her with irresistible force out of the crowd of churchmen, down the stairs, across the hall to the entrance of the palace. There she thrust her mistress, who was scarcely in command of her senses, into the carriage and leaped in herself, meanwhile ordering the coachman to drive on. She did not tell him any destination, and only as the horses approached the vicinity of the Aschaffenburg Gate did she lean out of the window to shout, "To the Mint! To the Mint!"

Beside the Mint stood the prison. She wanted to try whether they would admit her to the Young Baron, and in doing so she divined the wish of the

Baroness. But when they got there and Lenette made known her request to the guard—a coarse, pock-marked fellow—he laughed in her face. They would have to have a permit from the Bishop, he said sarcastically, and after they were in, it would not be easy to get out again. The Baroness wrung her hands in despair. She shouted that they would not move from the spot, day and night, even if she had to sleep on the pavement.

All manner of curious, sympathetic, mocking or fearful people gathered about the two women; the guard alarmed his comrades; a corporal of the guard appeared; birdlike whistling sounded out of the winding side streets, and before one could know whence they came or whither they disappeared, crowds of young conspirators whisked by, while one heard a many-voiced whispering: "The day of the Visitation of our Lady, before sundown!" For the identity of the noble lady making the street the scene of her grief had become known very quickly, and also for whose sake she was in such distress.

The same evening, after she had in her despair driven once more to the house of the Bishop, only to be once more rebuffed, had then gone to the city hall and to the burgomaster, thereupon had hurried to the commandant of the city, Count Philippsburg, had everywhere lodged complaint and fervent petitions, had pointed to her noble lineage and high birth, had threatened action at law before the Imperial Chamber, before the Emperor, before the Landgrave of Hesse, before the King of France; had alternately sobbed, raved, flattered, humiliated herself, and finally, after she had returned to the prison in order, as a last resort, to bribe the guards with her jewels—after all this, she was seized there by the officers of the Bishop and conducted into a subterranean prison as suspect of witchcraft. This order came from Pater Gropp, for the Bishop was unable to take any measures whatsoever; he had been scarcely capable of affixing to the document his signature, which Pater Gropp needed for his own security; but the old man had trembled

like an aspen-leaf and appeared like a demented creature.

The Jesuit ordered that in the course of that very night the Baroness be put to the torture and questioned also about the Young Baron, her son, and his errors and sinful arts. The warrant signed by the Bishop empowered him to do this, but he had been unable, notwithstanding all efforts of persuasion, to induce the Bishop to have the boy tortured; for the Bishop continued to hope that the Young Baron would make a voluntary confession, through being frightened and intimidated. He would not permit the boy to be harmed in his body nor to be burned at the stake; if all efforts should prove vain he was to be decapitated.

This weakness gnawed at the vitals of Pater Gropp, but he placed high hopes in the inquisition of the Baroness, at which the Young Baron was to be present. Her tender organism would probably be unable to resist a serious attack, and the torture of soul which the Young Baron would suffer would perhaps affect him more forcefully

than any bodily torture could, in the course of which the demon might cause him to be stubborn by promising him a false martyr's crown. The welcome excuse for the arrest of the Baroness had been found in the news that reached the city at noon to the effect that Castle Ehrenberg was going up in flames, and that the peasants and shepherds out there were accusing the Baroness of having intentionally caused the fire, which had started in the attic. It was quite possible that through her walking with the candle in the upper part of the house a spark had fallen on the inflammable rubbish and had smouldered for a day or two. When she heard of the fire she heaved a sigh from the very depths of her heart and said in an incautious manner: "Praise be to Jesus Christ that the house of disaster is removed from the face of the earth!" This was interpreted as half a confession and was noted.

She quietly allowed herself to be taken prisoner, slightly raising her childlike, narrow face with its waxen skin and turning it away from the smoking

pitch-torches. With a sudden access of dignity she stepped through the gate of the prison surrounded by soldiers. Meanwhile Lenette had quickly doffed her shoes and slipped away with catlike tread under cover of the darkness. An hour later she had found Master Molitor; racked by a heavy fever he lay in the house of his learned friend, Provost Lieblein. She gave an account of all that happened. Her grey hair hung in strands over her temples, her clothes were torn, her cape she had lost, yet her narrative was clear and brief. She closed with the words: "I am an unworthy woman in the sight of God our Lord, but if I am still to believe in Him, He must send help now."

At the edge of the bed sat the Provost with downcast eyes and an expression of infinite sadness about his mouth, a beautiful old man. In the background of the room, where no light fell, there leaned against the wall Friedrich Spe.

XIV

Pater Spe had already heard a good deal of the Young Baron of Ehrenberg; the entire region of the two bishoprics was familiar to him, and in the cities and villages he knew many people. Thus he had learned of the wonderful doings of the boy at a time when they had not yet penetrated beyond the scope of a few Spessart villages, but every time when his wanderings brought him again into the region, new things were told him of this teller of fairy-tales, many of which in themselves sounded like fairy-tales. At times he was tempted to go there, to be present, to see, to listen, but then more urgent duties claimed him; there were too many unfortunate ones who called to him; he dared not spend his time on pleasant things. That the Ehrenberg business should come to a happy end had always seemed extremely doubtful to him; it was so little in accord with the general temper of the country,

with the mood of the peasant and the burgher, and with what the lords were doing with their hired men and serfs.

He had seen or experienced but little that was gay; what little hope he still cherished became more attenuated every year, until nothing remained except a bare stalk on which his spirit held itself upright with a noble effort, striving to find and to approach the divine. Many a person is lamed by sorrow; he, on the other hand, became flexible and eager; many flee into solitude when the face of the world stares at them in its skeleton-like reality; not he—he remained among men and strove not to become weary—either of them or of their deeds.

"Love urges me on and burns in me," he said, and quietly went on his way. While the sight of suffering and the crimes of religious mania stifled him like the smoke in a subterranean cave, he composed the beautiful songs of the *Defiant Nightingale*. He had no property; he craved no honour, no gratitude, no apparent fruits of his

labours, but the poor and the ravished laid down their testimony before the throne of God. He was a member of an old family; his father had been warden of the castle of the Elector Gebhardt Truchsess von Waldburg. He had studied in the Jesuit Academy of the Three Crowns, and had become a Jesuit because he wished to go out into a distant mission-field. This dream alone had filled his early years, and once upon a time he had written to the general of his Order, Mutius Vitelleschi: "India has wounded my heart."

But soon he had seen that his own country needed him much more, and that the benighted heathen would have to wait so long as the Christians continued to carry on as they did. Then he began to wander from place to place, a light incarnate.

Just as the lighted candle's flame
Its inner substance burneth,
So worldly glory whence it came
Swift into naught returneth;

Because the candle's melting heart
Its glowing light must nourish,
To waste more quickly every part
It braves the tempest's flourish.

For the unfortunate women who had to be living torches in the darkness of the century he became the guide into the gate of death, and caused to bloom in their hearts the belief in a higher world, the form and meaning of which he created out of the depth of his soul in words as fresh and pure as the beginning of life. Perhaps that was the reason why it seemed to him that an invisible thread bound him to the Young Baron of Ehrenberg, and if someone mentioned his name it seemed as though he were receiving news of a younger brother whom he had never seen; he felt something strange that divided them, but also something of blood-kinship that bound them together. For a long time he had not given the boy any thought, aware only that he was living with his uncle, the Bishop. The monomaniac fury

of the Bishop had for years been causing Friedrich Spe sleepless nights; he had expected no good of the young man's stay in the company of the Bishop; yet the catastrophe had come sooner than he had expected.

As soon as he heard from Provost Lieblein that they had cast the Young Baron into prison, he decided immediately to visit him; he not only had official permission to do this, but as father-confessor he was free to do so at all times. Silently he sat at the table while Master Onno, already attacked by the fever, was pleading for help for his pupil; even more silently he listened to the story of deaf old Lenette, whose courage would have failed her in speaking so freely before the learned men, had not indignation and pain loosened her tongue. Silently he took leave, accompanied to the door by the Provost, whose hand he pressed warmly. He did not want to delay till morning, but when he came to the prison he was told that he could not see the Young Baron; a strict order had been issued that not even the Fathers were to visit him.

Such an order could have been issued only by Pater Gropp. Spe therefore sent out the Dominican Lambrecht Dynand, who had just returned from a witch-burning, but Pater Gropp was nowhere to be found ; it was said that he had left the city together with the Bishop. The latter had had only one idea—to get to a place of safety before the supposed fury of the populace broke forth. But the patient people—they did not stir; the belief in witches had been beaten into them too thoroughly.

Meanwhile Pater Spe's spiritual duty called him to other condemned victims. In the morning he learned that thumb-screw and Spanish boots had been applied to the Baroness, that her son had been forced to witness this, and that he had been carried away unconscious. It seemed doubtful whether or not the Baroness would survive the next stage of the torture, but she refused to see any confessor; she sang to herself in a demented state, fondling an imaginary child which she took to be her son. Only on Friday, the day of the Visitation

of our Lady, after a renewed appeal to Pater Gropp, who had meanwhile returned to the city and was in charge of the Bishop's business affairs, was permission granted to Pater Spe to visit the Young Baron in his prison.

Baron Ernest was sitting on a wooden bench, clutching the seat with both hands, and his fixed gaze was turned upward. His face was haggard, but in his eyes there was a glitter that the Pater could not bear to see. Through a loophole-like window a dim light fell into the mouldy room, which seemed like the interior of a bulging bottle; the ceiling was vaulted. The Young Baron's right foot was encased in an iron ring which was connected by a heavy chain lying on the stone floor with another ring fixed in the middle of the wall. His features had not yet lost the expression of extreme amazement over what had happened and was happening to him. At times he had risen suddenly with wildly heating heart and had run up and down in the cell, dragging the chain behind him, with his finger-tips tapping along the rough,

cold wall. He listened in the night to the terror-inspiring sounds that penetrated to him from far up above, or from below, or from the right or the left—he was unable to tell; it sounded like stifled whisperings, then sounds of sawing, then knocking, then a distant cry as though from a peacock. He was unable to realize that there were always thick walls about him, that the ponderous, ponderously locked door, which it was useless to rattle, would not let him out. During the first days he did not touch any food; he only drank of the water, not from stubbornness, but from bewilderment.

Three times he had been led away to be examined, but he did not understand the questions, and instead of answering he laughed and looked about him incredulously. All appeared to him so foolish, like an inconceivable practical joke that had been perpetrated on him in a dream; he could find in it all no connection and no reason. Thus he incited the wrath of the judge, but no one was permitted to lay hands on him; they could only threaten him with torture and show him the

instruments. Still, his bearing, his sincere manner of asking questions, his fearlessness, which he displayed just like a flower, did not fail to make an impression even on the petrified hearts of the judges. Jailers and hangmen who had often seen and heard all that the consciousness of innocence can inspire in despairing victims, who were dulled against all pleadings and all pain, found themselves quite disarmed by this sprite-like cheerfulness and half-smiling inattention. Often he seemed merely astonished at the horrors and at the prospect of the terrible things to come; he seemed to be saying to himself: "Such things exist in the world; I must remember that." It seemed as though he were observing himself, as he was observing the others; as though his person and his fate were two distinct things; as if he had to weave into himself or absorb the new knowledge he was gaining.

Then they fetched him to witness the tortures of the Baroness, because they thought this a sure means of obtaining from him the confession of

his connection with evil spirits. Concerning the Baroness they had no worries; they knew that in her querulous weakness she would, even in the first degree of torture, confess herself to be a witch. But in this they had grossly miscalculated. The Baroness, on seeing the boy, stretched out her arms toward him with ecstatic delight and forgot everything about her, her raging pains and the fact that she lay there naked to her hips. There was a momentary bright flash in the Young Baron's eyes when he saw that he had now gained a mother, wrested her from Fatè, like Irene of the fairy-tale, of whom he had, full of presentiment, told the Bishop. Then he whispered, "Oh, my poor Saviour!" and sank without another word down on to the red flags. All about him was red—the flagging, the fire, the torches, the blood, the shirts of the hangmen. They had to carry him off, for his consciousness returned only twelve hours later. After that they left him in his cell, by order of the Dominican Gassner, who feared that the soul of the malefactor might escape too soon, causing the Church to

lose its well-deserved prey. Now he had been sitting on the bench all day long, clutching the seat with his hands and gazing upward. What was there to be seen?

Pater Spe stood for a while silent, his head bowed on his chest; then he said softly: "God greet you, Baron Ernest."

The Young Baron listened, and it seemed quite a long while before he replied: "Your voice sounds very pleasant to me; who are you?"

The Father answered: "I am Pater Spe. Perhaps you have heard of me. I have often wandered up the Spessart toward Rimpar and have often passed Castle Ehrenberg."

Thereupon the Young Baron: "That may well be, Father."

Thereupon the Father: "If I am unknown to you, I wish that you would learn to know me. I know you very well."

The Young Baron was silent and seemed to be reflecting.

"If you know me," he said at last in his surprised

intonation, "then perhaps you can tell me why I am here."

Now it was the Father's turn to be silent.

"You cannot tell me anything," continued the Young Baron. "I had thought so. Tell me at least this much: is the world still standing in its old place?"

It sounded like a pleasantry in his charming manner of old, but it was not.

"It does, unmoved in its old place; God in heaven sees to that."

"And is the sun still shining, Father? I dreamed that the Lord Jesus had commanded the three archangels to cover the sun with a huge sheet, until the new year comes, and if anyone grumbled about this, or raised only a tiny edge of the sheet with his hand, he was to be condemned to hear his own mother shriek out of the fiery oven."

Heaving a deep sigh, the Father said: "Young Baron, I beg of you, do not make your dreams the clock by which you tell the time."

The queer phrase, quite in the manner of

Friedrich Spe, caused Baron Ernest to start. As he heard it, it seemed to him as though dream and life had collapsed into one. Were not the dial and the indicator of the dream-world still in him, pointing to the wrong hour? Thoughtfully he looked upward, then searchingly at his visitor; finally he laid his hands together (his favourite gesture) and said: "You still have a youthful face, Father; why has your hair already turned white?"

Pater Spe smiled.

"The very same question Canon Philipp von Schönborn asked me the other day," he replied; "I answered, that it was the result of so much that has been in vain."

"What do you mean by that?"

"Because of all the sighs and tears that are in vain and always call up new sighs; one cannot dry the tears, one cannot stifle the sighs; the former are like the sea, the latter like a hurricane, increasing and swelling. Because of all the words that are in vain; perhaps, too, because of the deeds that are in vain. Because of the innocent ones who

perish, of the guilty ones who carry their heads high. Because of the all-too-much, Young Baron, of the all-too-dreary. I have seen what goes forward under the sun, I have praised the dead as more happy than the living, but I hold those most fortunate of all who have never been born, who need not witness what goes on under the sun. All nature is mourning on this account; why should I not mourn? Why should my hair not have turned white?"

The Young Baron looked at him a long time in silence, and then he said: "Don't you want to come to me, Venerable Father, and sit beside me on the bench?"

Pater Spe gave a friendly nod and did not hesitate to accept the invitation. It was for him a pleasant sensation to feel the Young Baron so near him; seldom had he felt such intimate sympathy streaming out of himself and toward himself. His fellow-man, not only the one present whom he could see and hear, but the spirit of mankind itself became dear to him as never before, lovable

above all else, a brother creature out of the same womb and guided by an unfathomable Spirit whom no faith, no declaration, no name, no prayer can reach, in Whom we live, move and have our being.

The Young Baron looked at him intently.

"Speak, dear Father," he said.

"What shall I say?" asked Pater Spe.

"Tell me," begged the Young Baron—"tell me something about yourself."

This was an unexpected demand out of this mouth and it moved him as though a singing bird had flown on to his hand to listen to the rough sounds of the human throat.

"Aren't you the one, Baron Ernest, who is considered the master in story-telling?" he asked, joking mildly. "What is there new that I could tell you?"

The Young Baron shook his head; his lips stammered something, but Pater Spe could not understand it. Yet he sensed that here was one who had lost his way; the confused mind of the

boy appealed to him and pleaded for direction and advice. He had been thrust out into the darkness, this care-free young wanderer; the higher powers had given him very much, he was richly gifted by Nature, his soul was a fiery sphere floating through space in disregard of the laws of gravity, sufficient unto itself in its beautiful ardour; but Fate had caught it up and held it in its terrible grasp so that it feared and trembled. In this situation he received no aid from the winged genius in whom he had always before unhesitatingly trusted. He had been too lonely, too much dependent upon himself and lost in his dreams, without father, mother, friend, brother or sister, and what he was yearning for were the words of life, the nearness of hearts, the nearness of earth and its reality.

Pater Spe recognized this and began to tell him his story: how he had gone out to aid the poor; how he had, out of profound solicitude for the people, wandered from land to land, from city to city, and everywhere had found only

suffering and oppression, lies, cruelty and hatred; how hard it had been not to lose courage, not to give up faith in humanity.

He spoke of the scourge of war, of pestilence and famine, of the blind rage of the fanatics for the faith, of the perfidy of the great, of the bitter suffering into which the German Fatherland had fallen, all the jealousies and superstition, the slander and defamation, a sick body kicking at his doctor and spitting at his nurse. He told the breathlessly listening youth of occurrences and coincidences; how, just a few days before, he had picked up two little children out of the rubbish; how in a deserted village he had found an old man, of venerable aspect like the Prophet Jeremiah, fuming quite like the latter with curses and horrible visions; how he had taken the old man into his arms like an infant and brought him peace; how he had come into a city whose inhabitants had almost all become insane—for insanity, like a plague, had seized old and young, rich and poor—they had all been expecting the end of the world

because they had been forced to suffer too much—three times the bloody horrors of the armies moving back and forth, three times torture and damnation, and now they were awaiting the end.

Then he told of witches and his conversations with them; how arrogance and fanaticism were making a victim of every rare and noble woman. Some who meant well stood by unthinkingly, while the lust of others feasted on the sight of beautiful, quivering flesh. All of this made one feel like crying out his grief to future generations of mankind, for the contemporaries were deaf in body, in spirit and in soul. "What secrets, Young Baron! Black lusts, vices from the very lowest strata, lyingly proclaimed as the law and justice of the world, cooked up with the scum of thought out of the kitchens of poisoners!"

The poor women—O tortured Christ!—when he thought of them! How many of them had clung to him like drowning people to a beam! How the horror had crept out of their lips as the plagued skin of the bodies was covered with

festering sores! How nothing could make headway against this fanaticism, how unreason had grown into fiendish lust; he was always surprised that day and night still followed one another in the accustomed order, that horse and cow and ass still tolerated the breath of man, even though not his gaze—no animal could endure that! And yet, on the other hand, man was a superior creature; out of bestial wickedness there gleamed at times the noble metal of his original nature.

"There was a malefactor in Cologne," said Spe, "a murderer who was to be executed. In vain were all efforts to move him to a penitent frame of mind. Then I said to him: 'You know that I have some merit on my account; I'll put it on yours and make you a present of it, if you will say that you are sorry for your crime.' Then the man felt remorse; he thought back over his past and did penance in great contrition. But before he was to die, he implored me on his knees to take back my merit again, for he could not step before God Almighty with those filched works of merit.

It was too late, however; I had given him everything, and there was nothing for me to do but to begin again at the very beginning."

After a short silence he continued: "That was my hardest time. I had lost my good deeds to the poor sinner and turned in prayer to my Saviour. I implored Him to cause all who had previously loved me to hate me, and all who had befriended me to persecute me, so that I might be given the opportunity to put to the trial the entire strength of my soul. And this came to pass; my prayer was heard. From that time on I have been a stumbling-block to my superiors, avoided in the cloister, regarded with suspicion by the rulers of my country, slandered by my spiritual brethren. But I bear it with joy."

The Young Baron had gradually leaned over toward Spe the better to see his face; his two hands rested on the Father's knee; he had pressed one shoulder against his chest, and thus he listened with a thoughtful glance, his head raised.

"I knew nothing about men," he said. "Now you are teaching me."

"If you are absorbing my teaching, Young Baron, you must forget it again. Some live by their eyes, some by reason, very few by their hearts."

"I use my eyes, dear Father; do not slander them."

"To be sure; it would seem to me you have envisaged much with your eyes. I have only seen much."

"I know all the hiding-places in the forest," said the Young Baron almost proudly.

"And what else?" asked Spe.

"I know where the owls have their nests and where the deer go to drink."

"And what else?"

"I know the stars, and I know where the Pleiades rise, in summer and winter, and the Great Bear, and the Hair of Berenice."

"That is a great deal, Young Baron, but, as you say, it has nothing to do with men."

The Young Baron became more and more confiding.

"And when you think," he whispered, "what treasures there are hidden in the earth—gold, and silver, and gems, and if one is of the elect he can see them glistening by night. He can also hear how the sap runs in the trees and what the water whispers in the well."

"Then you are a sorcerer after all, Young Baron?"

Baron Ernest asked with trembling lips: "Is that witchcraft, Father?"

"It might be witchcraft," answered Pater Spe in deep thought, "a kind, however, that is not recorded in the *Malleus Maleficorum*. There are magical games, my child, a kind of bewitched longing, which lures the spirit of the one who yields to it away from his true purpose in life. And now you want to learn from me what this true purpose is? But, you see, I cannot tell you that. I dare not attempt to say it. There teaching is but wind, and the world is a tinkling cymbal. That

must grow out of your feeling. Do you understand me? Would to God that you might understand me rightly; otherwise I have brought you nothing but error and sorrow."

In the Young Baron's face an unusual struggle was taking place. For a few moments it was quite rigid, the lips shut tightly upon each other; then, when the convulsion was past, he whispered: "I believe—I believe I understand you, Father. Ever since my mother has appeared in this house I feel so differently, I can't describe quite how. Well, Father, it was only a vision, wasn't it? Tell me, it was a vision?"

Intently and full of fear he looked at Pater Spe's face, as though he feared the "no" not less than the "yes," as though he wanted to deceive and to be deceived and to escape from knowledge with all the strength of his imagination. Vain endeavour. His features became lined like those of an old man; he laid his folded hands on Spe's shoulder and pleaded: "You must bring me news of her, Father—promise me that. Until I have

news of her, my mind is entirely distraught. Promise me, good Father!"

It had become dark meanwhile. Spe sighed deeply and was just about to give the sought-for promise when an inexplicable noise reached them, a distant sharp whirring and rumbling that came steadily nearer and swelled tremendously.

XV

THE news of the imprisonment of the Young Baron of Ehrenberg had become known in the course of three days in the entire bishopric and far beyond it. Despite the fact that Pater Gropp had forbidden his subordinates to mention it, the event was known as early as the following morning in the most distant parts of the city, and since the news had not remained inside the Bishop's palace, the city walls and gates could not hinder its spread; it hurried from village to village, from hamlet to hamlet, from district to district, from settlement to settlement, up and down the Main River, to the north and to the south. As though by a rapid and well-regulated courier service it was carried to Frickenhausen and Rinderfeld as well as to Scheinfeld and Ludwigsbad, into the solitudes of the Spessart Mountains and into the vineyards near Kitzingen. It was repeated in the

taverns, on the markets, in the stalls, in the churches. The coachmen on the highways told each other in passing, the farmers while cutting their meadows, the vine-dressers while tying up the vines, the soldiers at the camp-fires, while beggars, gipsies, monks and wandering scholars offered it in return for alms. The old folks shook their heads sadly; there was surely nothing diabolical about this noble Young Baron, since they knew only of joy that had gone out from him. The city council of Würzburg received from the captain of a band of robbers in the Odenwald a letter written in Latin demanding the Young Baron's immediate release, otherwise they would set fire to the city.

But all of this was just a surface ripple compared with the deep stirring in the hearts of the youth, of the children. The thousands and thousands of children in numberless places who had seen him and listened to his stories in well-spent hours could not forget him. He had become a part of their thoughts; he appeared to them like a holiday

incarnate, like a happy event of which one speaks a long time beforehand and a long time afterward. The Young Baron—the term had on many lips a tone of tenderness not called forth by anything else in a lifetime; it expressed an expectation fulfilled only once and in this one being. Why should they not be thankful for the wonderful dream he had planted in their hearts like a magic flower in a sandy piece of ground? Why should they not wish him back, since he taught them to give a name to what was beautiful and to forget what was sad?

When it became known that their beloved friend was lying in chains in the prison in Würzburg, a dreadful horror flooded through the youthful souls as though it had suddenly become dark at noon or the Main River had frozen in midsummer. But as yet there was no will present, no surging spirit, although here and there the afflicted were gathering together and the oldest asked each other shyly what was to be done, since they deemed it insufferable to undertake nothing and to yield

meekly. The impulse to action came soon and swept them away irresistibly.

Brother Felician had talked about it to the preceptors of the boarding pupils, and Peter Mayer had been eavesdropping. While his comrades remained in timid terror, he was from the very first resolved to interfere actively, and since he felt unhappy in the boarding school, he made use of an unguarded moment to escape. At the Church of the Holy Spirit he met Silberhans and told him excitedly what he knew. Silberhans, eager to put an end to his vagabonding idleness, laid plans for the spread of the news in the city, in company with the student Barger and the tanner Batsch. Meanwhile Peter Mayer escaped through the Heidingfeld Gate and collected about him his friends from the vicinity of Kitzingen. For sixteen hours he was on the road. The flame, once lighted, ran quickly.

The children of one village came to an understanding with those of the next, and from one town to another their decisions were made known. On

the Thursday before the Day of the Visitation of our Lady it was already fixed that the Young Baron must be freed.

"We want to get the Young Baron back," they said; "we want to fetch him out of prison!"

The how and the when was not discussed for the moment, but runners from Würzburg at hourly intervals brought secret commands, and these flew through the entire country in an inconceivably swift manner. On Friday and Saturday great crowds gathered before Castle Ehrenberg, stood in the court for hours, looked up at the walls, whispered secrets to one another, and in the evening they called out the name of the Young Baron as though they wished to convince themselves that he was not there, if they received no answer. In the course of the night preceding the Sunday on which the castle went up in flames, many hundreds came, children of peasants, of woodmen, of shepherds, also a dozen journeymen of the guild of Karlstadt and Ochsenfurt, and they held a council of war by the light of the fire.

A certain fellow named Goebeling made a loud and fiery speech and then they all marched off toward Würzburg, lighted for a long way by the burning castle, and singing rebel songs all along their nocturnal route. Nobody knew whence the rumour had come, but it had become known that the Young Baron was to be put to death on Friday, the Day of the Visitation of Our Lady, at the hour of midnight, and therefore Friday was selected for the chief stratagem ; at sunset-time the Young Baron was to be rescued from the prison. Meanwhile also the children of Würzburg had been won over; they represented a large reinforcement; and often those were most active in the business who knew of the Young Baron only by hearsay.

St. Mary's Hill, with its impassable ravines and declivities, formed the head-quarters of the emissaries and the early arrivals from the country; they had to bring order into their difficult plan and discipline into their hourly increasing wild mob. At the foot of the hill was a hidden gate in the wall,

and the sentry living in the guard-house at that point, for years the same rheumatic veteran, was made drunk every evening by the tanner Batsch and Dominic Eisenbeiss, a carpenter's apprentice. Then, under cover of darkness, the conspirators arrived, led by the older, sixteen- or seventeen-year-old boys, after they had hidden themselves in the daytime near the river or in the vineyards.

It was indeed a surprising thing that these revolutionary intrigues, meetings and crowds at all points were noticed but little in the city. It was scarcely due to any caution on the part of the children, but rather to the general perplexity and confusion. That no treachery took place was due to the awful deafness and blindness with which the citizens were afflicted, as well as to the mute, elemental sweep of youthful enthusiasm. Many things, of course, caused surprise, many questions were asked and even warnings given, but no one felt especially inclined to prevent a catastrophe, the good or bad effect of which was certainly a

matter for reserved judgment. As a matter of fact, most people were eager for something terrible to happen, since their spirits were worn out by torturing uncertainty.

In addition to this there were rumours coming out of the Bishop's palace. Some said that the Bishop himself was now possessed with the devil and that Pater Gropp was endeavouring by means of incantations to snatch him from the claws of Satan; others maintained that the Baroness of Ehrenberg had through witchcraft afflicted him with a severe sickness; still others claimed to have learned that the Archbishop of Mainz had issued an apostolical brief against the cruel rage of his colleague and that now things would take a turn for the better.

In all this talk there was some grain of truth. The Bishop was really sick; he lay in his summer home in Veitshöchheim, where fever and chills were tossing him about like a ball. Although the accusation of the Baroness had not led him to see the error of his ways, yet it had confused his mind

in a horrible manner. Shudders seized him as he saw himself whirled into the weirdly smoking abyss, pale terror gripped him as he saw the same arguments turned against himself, the same suspicious clues discovered in his actions, by means of which he had heaped untold misery on his subjects. To be sure he had done so to break Lucifer's power, but in all his measures he had held to the mental reservation that his own person possessed a charm against the hellish temptations. If that were not the case he was lost, nothing could save him, and groaning in his bed he sent prayers to Heaven, and then again called out the Young Baron's name. He spoke to him in his feverish fantasies and counted it as a great merit to himself that he had spared him the torture, although he had been tempted to do so—hellishly tempted, as he admitted when the spirit of contrition overcame him.

What was the origin, after all, of the love which he felt for the boy, that he would gladly have sacrificed his money and property—yes, perhaps

even the salvation of his soul—for a sign of affection, while at the same time he felt a gruesome lust to destroy the very body that aroused these feelings? It was of hellish origin, no doubt, and thus he was damned; he no longer had the right to sit as a judge over others. He called his secretary, Baumgarten, gave orders that all who were accused of witchcraft and sorcery were to be freed; and then, with a trembling hand, he signed the document, destined for Pater Gropp.

The latter did not trust his eyes when he read it. To empty the witches' prison overnight meant to unloosen all the demons of the kingdom of the air, to cast the upper world, just after it had been cleaned with much labour, as a prey to the infernal one; a splendid work would be robbed of its fruit and all Christendom would be in danger. He refused to carry out the command; especially in regard to the Young Baron, who seemed to him the very quintessence of the spirit of the devil, he would not hear of acquittal. On the contrary, he secretly gave the order to have this boy, although

he had not confessed, put to death by the sword on the following night, as it had been decided long before. At the same time he sent a messenger to the Bishop requesting leave to return to his Order, in the confident expectation that the Bishop would not be able to do without him and would not permit him to go. His chagrin was great when an answer came from the Bishop accepting his resignation.

The secrecy of the order for the execution was of no avail to Pater Gropp. Secretary Baumgarten, who was hostile to the Jesuit, did not consider himself bound to preserve silence, and although the order, as the confirmation of a judgment previously passed, did not come as a surprise, still, through its irrevocable finality, it had the effect of a trumpet-blast calling to revolution. At last the citizens and the common people were roused out of their apathy; many learned of the conspiracy in the interest of Baron Ernest, but they themselves did not dare to move; the oppression under which they had been panting for so long had made them

cowardly; they locked themselves up in their houses and awaited the events to come.

On Friday afternoon at four o'clock a great stream of children began to pour in through the city gates. The sentries stood there with open mouths and the officers did not know how to act. Before the requested order from the commandant arrived, there was no longer any stopping the onrushing mob. From Stone Hill they surged down, from St. Mary's Hill they teemed down like ants. Blue, green and red flags fluttered in the sunlight, and a whirring of voices, as though from a million-fold amplified concert of crickets, shook the air.

At Aschaffenburg Gate the guard started to wind up the drawbridge. In the midst of the rattling of chains were heard the children's horrified cries of terror. Fifteen or twenty fell into the moat and were drowned. A cavalry officer coming from the city flew into a terrible rage over the crime of the gate watch, and slashed about him with his sword. Then the bridge was lowered again, because,

as the captain explained, one could not treat the children as enemy conquerors; and even if their intentions were inimical, it was not right to assail them with so treacherous a device. But the news of this event was everywhere repeated with bitterness; it was said that hundreds had been drowned in the moat, and now the rage of the intruders was beyond restraint.

At five o'clock it was impossible even to estimate the size of the crowd. "It's like vermin, like a swarm of locusts," the helpless burgomaster put it to his colleagues. Before the parish church, on the square before the Cathedral, before the minster, the crowd was such that one might have walked over their heads. At six o'clock the alarm bells on all the churches began to ring, the militia was called out, the watch at the castle sounded an alarm, in the market-place citizen volunteers formed in rank and file—a few dozen timid little men who did not know what they wanted.

A little before seven o'clock the pupils of a Premonstratensian cloister school marched home

through St. Catherine Street—boys and girls of five, six or seven years. They were returning from a pilgrimage to a church near St. Mary's Hill. Three musicians with trombones and a cornet came first, then two by two the pupils with their teachers, then again three musicians with violins, and at last the girls with flower wreaths in their hair, bouquets in their hands and prayer-books under their arms. In less time than it takes to pray a *Pater Noster* this wandering idyll was scattered and swallowed up by the surging mob, swept through the gorges of the narrow streets, on both sides of which the citizens leaned out of the windows, in mute curiosity and fear.

Recognizing their sons, daughters or grandchildren in the tumultuous crowd, some of the elders called them by name. Faces were raised up laughingly, threateningly or mockingly; it was an unending surge of blond, brown and black pigtails and closely cropped crowns. Out of the side streets ever new masses rolled up. "Those are from Dettelbach," people cried. "These from Ochsenfurt,

from Rimpar, from Zell, from Karlstadt, from Retzbach, from Volkach, from Marktbreit." Or they shouted a greeting to this or that valiant leader: "God greet you, Hans Christoph! God greet you, George Metzger! Heigh ho, Diebold Imsing!"

Wherever the armed militia appeared with their halberds, they were simply swept away by the human flood. The Salvaguardi of the Bishop were as little able to accomplish anything as the procession of Dominican monks who, with raised arms and extended crucifixes, attempted to block the entrance to Julius Square. The entire crowd drifted as though automatically toward the Mint.

There, on the moderately large semicircle formed by the receding building line of a group of ancient houses, a few hundred rebels had appeared between seven and eight o'clock. As time went on the boldest demanded admission to the prison, a request to which the three guards who were playing at dice and smoking pipes replied with a scornful laugh. When they became more insistent,

the soldiers threatened to break their heads, but at that moment there arrived groups of conspirators from all directions, through all the alleys. The sentinels became frightened, failing to see what might be coming, and hurriedly closed the gate.

Furious cries broke like waves against the black walls, were taken up, renewed and repeated by the divided armies who were now knotted together as one. Their number rose to a thousand, two thousand, five thousand, eight thousand, and still the streets as far as one could see were full of half-grown figures. Those in the front rows picked up stones and hurled them against the windows, so that for a quarter of an hour nothing could be heard but the sharp splintering of glass panes; others pulled out fence posts and began to ram the gate. The student Barger, a vagabond painter by the name of Koselick and Peter Mayer took over the supreme command. The iron bars in the basement windows were broken out; nothing could stop or impede the onslaught; united, the number-

less weak arms had the power of giants. The oaken door gave way and the sentinels fled. A few minutes after the clock on the Cathedral tower had chimed eight the furious mob, with veritably deafening shouts, roars of triumph and songs of rejoicing, poured into the deserted building, pushed and surged through the corridors on every floor, and a thousand-fold cry, "The Young Baron! the Young Baron!" resounded from all the vaults.

Peter Mayer, always in the vanguard, had managed to find out the cell in which the Young Baron was imprisoned. He gruffly demanded the key from a guard; already Batsch was at his one side, Silberhans at the other; they raised their pistols against the hesitating guard; thirty, forty boys hammered against the door of the cell with clubs; Silberhans, key in hand, forced his way through the crowd; the heavy door flew open; there stood the Young Baron, pale, quiet, immensely surprised, and behind him Pater Spe. But the intruders saw only their beloved hero; they rushed toward him; two picked him up and raised him

on their shoulders, while the others executed a wild dance of joy.

A jubilant cry, "We've got him! We've got him!" resounded through the halls and down the stairs. They carried him, so to speak, out of the grave into the bright evening, and they were received with a cheer of rejoicing that shook the very heavens, uttered by the impatiently expectant crowd that stood as thick as grass in the meadow.

Inside the prison many other doors were opened. A number of citizens and craftsmen had meanwhile also occupied the building. Under the protection of the revolt they had taken courage and wished to secure their relatives. Pater Spe worked his way through the crowd with great difficulty and made inquiries concerning the Baroness of Ehrenberg. With the aid of a beggar monk he finally discovered the iron cage where she lay imprisoned, stretched out on a bundle of straw, tired unto death, mortally pale and her breath rattling in her throat. He succeeded in inducing the monk and a hunch-

backed journeyman locksmith to carry the lady on a stretcher through an out-of-the-way exit to the house of the Provost. There he made sure at first that her life could be saved, instructed Lenette, who was speechless with joy, what had to be done to nurse her mistress back to life (for in regard to such knowledge he was the equal of any learned doctor) and then returned to the prison.

He found the place empty; only a few loiterers were moving about in the darkness. But from afar he still heard the shrill cheers of rejoicing, and he followed the direction indicated by the strange noise. He had not gone far when he saw a scarlet sheaf of flame rising up to the sky, houses and streets came to an end, and he entered a gently rising plain—the bleaching-green. Up to the city wall, whose ivy-covered turrets cut sharply into the bluish-black ether, the entire plain was covered by hurrying, scurrying masses of juvenile rebels, boys and girls.

There they had carried the rescued Young Baron,

always two of them by turns, on their shoulders, and when the load had become too heavy for them, two others had relieved them. But they did not easily tire of this service of honour and love; many were eager to assume it—peasants' sons, strong fellows. There was a mossy stone on the bleaching-green; here they let him down, and set him upon it as on a green throne. It gradually was becoming dark; as they wanted above all to see him, they gathered straw, twigs, withered roots and dry leaves, piled it up into a gigantic heap and set fire to it. A huge flame flared up, which was then diligently tended, and by its glow the entire army of rebels streamed down to the bleaching meadow. All wanted to see the Young Baron; thronging dangerously, some climbed the poplars which stood in a wide arch along the city wall, others rolled up empty casks from the wine tavern of Kaspar Bösen-Schwechelhoff and stood on them; others, again, took the opportunity to present to the Young Baron the little things they had brought with them: cheese, various kinds of fruits, freshly

baked bread, honey rolled in leaves, objects they had been carrying about for hours in their pockets or knapsacks and which they presented to the Young Baron—their tribute, so to speak. At the same time they pushed and jostled one another, little girls shrieked in terror, and the Young Baron saw that he had to tame the general ardour, lest there should be some accident.

He arose and made a signal with his hand. He was greeted with endless cheers out of innumerable throats; they understood his request and remained standing each on the spot where he was. Then the Young Baron glided down to a kneeling position and sat back on his heels, a posture they knew very well, for thus he had squatted before them when he had told his stories. They remembered this and attached their hopes to this memory. Thousands of pairs of eyes were turned on him expectantly. Gathered round about him he saw hungry eyes, glistening both by reason of the fire and because of enthusiasm and expectation, not only in the first row before him, but in many

rows behind, always one pair of eyes between two heads, so far back that the June night obscured their features, everywhere eyes like glow-worms, like shimmering stones, like metal and coloured soulful spheres.

Suddenly they broke out into the cry, "A story, Young Baron—a story!" in every kind of voice and pitch possible between the ages of nine and seventeen, changing alto, clear soprano, chirping sounds and guttural tones. Always they raised it anew, the same battle and rallying cry; it passed from mouth to mouth, through the hundred rows; it came from the utmost edge, although those who stood there could only have heard a trumpet, not a story-teller's voice. As the Young Baron remained silent, looking downward in anguish and drooping his head more and more, they began once again: "A story, Young Baron—a story!"—"Of Master Grimmerlein!"—"Of the treasure-digger Bottomless!"—"Of the Mandrake and the Silver Fairy!"—"Of King Grünewald!"—"Of the miracle-working fountain!"

The Young Baron raised his eyes with an embarrassed glance which roamed over the crowd as though he were appealing for aid. Then he saw among the youthful figures, crowded head next to head, Pater Spe, tall and strangely different from them. He had made his way through the crowd slowly and stood there quietly; out of his eyes, so different from children's eyes, knowing and sad, and from his moving lips, the Young Baron read, gathered and obtained the news for which he had been waiting with painfully oppressed heart, had waited for so tensely that all this was as nothing to him, the liberation, the cheering, the wide sky above the earth, the pleading voices and the glowing glances—all this had been as nothing.

"News of your mother I bring, and that she has been rescued and will live." Thus ran the message.

He raised himself up, an ecstatic smile quivering about his lips, and said: "I am going to tell you a story; not one of those you

know—quite a different one: the story of Young Baron Ernest of Ehrenberg. But not to-day; after a year perhaps—two years, perhaps; only have patience, this I beg of you—only patience. . . ."

GEORGE ALLEN & UNWIN LTD.
LONDON: 40 MUSEUM STREET, W.C.1
CAPE TOWN: 73 ST. GEORGE'S STREET
SYDNEY, N.S.W.: WYNYARD SQUARE
WELLINGTON, N.Z.: 4 WILLIS STREET

The Tale of Genji

By Lady MURASAKI

Translated by ARTHUR WALEY

Demy 8vo. 10*s.* 6*d. per vol.*

Vol. I. THE TALE OF GENJI *Fifth Impression*
Vol. II. THE SACRED TREE *Second Impression*
Vol. III. A WREATH OF CLOUD
Vol. IV. BLUE TROUSERS

"This classic is a significant acquisition for English literature."—*Manchester Guardian.*

"It gives no room for criticism. One accepts it, and is lulled into a swoon by the lovely monotony of affairs of the heart, of festivals, of elegant epistles, and of old ballads which filled the life of Japan in the year 1000 odd A.D."—*Morning Post.*

From Double-Eagle to Red Flag

By P. N. KRASSNOFF

With a Preface by WILLIAM GERHARDI

Sm. Royal 8vo. 21*s.*

"The author has great literary power, and his descriptions of mass-movements are extraordinarily vivid."—*Observer.*

"It gives us for the first time a comprehensive, intimate and convincing picture of the collapse of Russia. An astonishing literary feat."—*Evening Standard.*

"Nobody capable of appreciating good work will deny that it is a really remarkable book and that in its author, General Krassnoff, European literature has discovered a new literary star of more than merely respectable magnitude."—*Sunday Times.*

A Night in the Luxembourg

By REMY de GOURMONT

Cr. 8vo. Translated by ARTHUR RANSOME 7*s.* 6*d.*

Of all the books by Remy de Gourmont, the French critic, poet, and novelist, "A Night in the Luxembourg" best illustrates his many-sided genius. It is at the same time the story of a miraculous adventure in the Gardens of the Luxembourg in Paris, and a conversation between a man and some immortals on God, gods, philosophers, man, woman, ants, Jews, love, and kindred subjects.

Conflicts

Cr. 8vo. By STEFAN ZWEIG 7*s.* 6*d.*

"His fiction has a leaping vitality and a kind of searching radiance which at first almost deceives the reader. . . ."—*Spectator.*

"It has sparks of the divine fire."—Arnold Bennett in *The Evening Standard.*

The Case Against La Roncière

By HANS AUFRICHT-RUDA

Cr. 8vo. Translated by BERNARD MIALL *7s. 6d.*

This is the first novel of a young German writer. While the author is careful to avoid the terminology of the new psychology, his novel is in fact the tragedy of two "complexes." It is the story of a French officer in the days of the Bourbons who was unjustly sentenced for a shameful assault upon his colonel's daughter—the story of an innocent man who could not bring himself to give convincing proof of his innocence, and a strange and pitiable penitent who could not confess.

The Legend Called Meryom

Cr. 8vo. By JOSEPH GAER *7s. 6d.*

This story of life among the Russian Jews is the work of a young author born and bred in the Bessarabian plains of which he writes. As a first novel it is of quite unusual quality; its stark simplicity challenges comparison with "Growth of the Soil" or "Tess of the D'Urbervilles." In its slow progress from birth to death, life in Lipcova is marked only with the changing seasons; one generation succeeds another; Meryom is born, marries, dies, and nothing is left of the beauty of her life except a crude portrait on a straw mat and a legend dying out among her grandchildren.

Short Turns

Cr. 8vo. By BARRY BENEFIELD *7s. 6d.*

Mr. Benefield is an American whose fame in his own country is as great as that of Mr. Sherwood Anderson, and in this book of short stories he shows to their best advantage both the gay and the wistful sides of his art. Although Mr. Benefield is far from being dependent on "magazine" situations for his appeal, he has an O. Henry neatness and effectiveness in manipulating his plots. There are fourteen stories in this book, and while they cover a wide range of character and setting they remain the stories of Mr. Benefield, who understands human nature and who knows how to laugh at it quietly and with sympathy.

Bugles in the Night

Cr. 8vo. By BARRY BENEFIELD *7s. 6d.*

Of Mr. Benefield the *Bookman* has written: "One has to go back to Dickens to find anything that so combines humour and pathos," and Mr. Benefield, whose earlier novel, "The Chicken-Wagon Family," took America by storm in 1925, has now written a new novel which conclusively proves that his initial success was no mere flash in the pan. Into the story of Easley Wheatley and Alice Kibbe Mr. Benefield has crowded his keen sense of the romantic and his endearing gift of seeing that people can be both funny and lovable.

The Mountain and Other Stories

Cr. 8vo. By St. JOHN ERVINE *7s. 6d.*

"His stories are excellent in form, move rapidly, and rarely fail to achieve the effect they intend—and Mr. Ervine is master of many effects."—*Saturday Review.*

"They are all vigorous, sincere, human, salted with a sufficiency of worldly wisdom and a wholly admirable irony."—*Daily News.*

"The title-story is particularly fine both in conception and treatment."—*Spectator.*

The Little Duchess

Cr. 8vo. By VINCENT SHEEAN *7s. 6d.*

Judith, the Duchess of Leftwich, married and came over to England in those far-off days when Queen Victoria was on the throne and the whole country lay wrapped in security and prosperity. The end of the book finds her in an atmosphere of saxophones and night-clubs, and in between these two sharply differentiated eras the whole unhappy story of Judith's life is told. Her marriage to the charming, unstable Tony was not a success, and from a romantic, idealistic girl, she turns into a firm, competent woman, without, however, losing that fineness and delicacy which make her so glorious a character.

The Marriage Bed

Cr. 8vo. By ERNEST PASCAL *7s. 6d.*

"A thoughtful and impressive appeal for marriage as an institution rather than as an adventure in sex. . . . Mr. Pascal's arguments are set forth with such restraint and subtlety and illustrated by such normal and convincing human beings that they take on an importance altogether beyond their strict value."—*The Times.*

Flowering Quince

Cr. 8vo. By DOROTHY VAN DOREN *7s. 6d.*

"Mrs. van Doren has a delicate touch and never fails with her characters. . . . A fine study."—*Westminster Gazette.*

"There is a charm and utterly fascinating delight in the book which should appeal to the most fastidious reader. It is a literary gem."—*Western Mail.*

119

869 560

his label must not be removed from this book, nor the figures thereon altered.

869

760

ONDITIONS OF ISSUE AS AN EXTRA VOLUME.

May only be borrowed under subscriptions of three months or over.

It MUST be returned to the branch from whence it was issued.

It may NOT be lent to any person outside subscriber's household.

It may not be transferred to subscription without sanction of the issuing librarian.

LOAN CHARGES.

Including Sundays, Holidays, or part of day it is kept.

As a CLASS "A" Vol. ... **1½**d. per day.

As a CLASS "B" Vol. **3**d. per week, or **2**d. for 3 days or part thereof.